

The Cultural Politics of Glasgow, European City of
Culture : Making Sense of the Role of the
Local State in Urban Regeneration

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This thesis has been composed entirely through my own efforts. Material from the thesis which has already been published is included at the end. Permission to publish this material was granted by supervisors.

Mark Boyle

NOTATION GUIDANCE

1. An effort has been made within to refer formally to the - 'European City of Culture event'. Nevertheless, on some occasions it has proven more appropriate to adopt abbreviated versions of the concept. These include; 'City of Culture', Cultural Capital of Europe, 'the event', 'Glasgow 1990', and just simply '1990'. Unless otherwise stated, these phrases should be taken to mean the 'European City of Culture event'.

2. Reference is made within to a group called 'Workers City'. Normally, one might expect this phrase to appear with an inverted comma after Workers - Workers' City. For an unknown reason, the group did not use the expected version during 1990. Consequently, the group's own 'Workers City' is used within.

ABSTRACT

This thesis takes its inspiration from the recent 'cultural turn' in Social Theory. The 'cultural turn' calls upon researchers to 'de-naturalise' many of the 'taken for granted' assumptions which sustain institutional practices as legitimate. Instead of studying social institutions *within* particular *interpretive communities*, the 'cultural turn' encourages researchers to make the *deconstruction* of *interpretive communities* itself the *raison d'être* of research.

The project focusses upon the role of the local state in areas undergoing urban regeneration. Urban regeneration has led the local state into policy areas it previously had no interest in. This has been accompanied by much debate over what the proper *role* of this institution ought to be. By deconstructing these debates, one can gain insight into the different *interpretive communities* which support the local state.

The empirical study examines the debates which took place in Glasgow during 1990 over the city's role as European City of Culture. Four areas of conflict are examined; the cultural substance of the event, the emphasis placed upon cultural as opposed to housing policy, the morality of image building projects, and the financial competence of officials.

The thesis advanced is that these four areas of conflict represent attempts by Glaswegians to make sense of a transition from a *managerialist* local state to an *entrepreneurial* one. The managerialist interpretive community operates with a reified concept of wealth redistribution and the provision of items of collective consumption. The entrepreneurial interpretive community, in contrast, operates with a reified concept of capitalism. The conflict generated between both communities is tantamount to a new *cultural politics* within which the 'proper' role of the local state is being shaped. Given the pervasiveness of conflict in Glasgow during 1990, it is concluded that *entrepreneurialism* did not necessarily secure hegemonic status in the city.

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INTRODUCTION

Research objectives : The Cultural Politics of Glasgow,
European City of Culture 1990

In September 1991, over forty participants took part in a conference at Edinburgh University entitled 'New Words, New Worlds : Reconceptualising Social and Cultural Geography (Philo 1991). This conference marked the latest and arguably most profound period of reflection within Geography vis-à-vis its relation with wider bodies of social theory. The key question addressed at the conference was how Geographers ought to respond to the cultural/linguistic turn which is seemingly gathering vigour across the Social Sciences.

As a sign of the times, the Edinburgh conference (among other things) represented a concrete manifestation of an emerging research tradition within Geography. This thesis takes its inspiration from this emerging tradition. The 'cultural turn' calls upon researchers to 'de-naturalise' the 'taken for granted' assumptions which sustain institutional(ised) practices as legitimate. Instead of studying social institutions *within* particular *interpretive communities* (as the Social Sciences has traditionally been apt to do), the 'cultural turn' encourages researchers to make the *deconstruction* of *interpretive communities* itself the *raison d'être* of research.

The project focusses upon the role of the Local State in areas undergoing Regeneration. Urban Regeneration has led the Local State into policy areas it previously had no interest in. Not surprisingly, it has been accompanied by much debate as to what the *proper* role of this institution ought to be. By *deconstructing* these debates, one can gain insight into the different *interpretive communities* which make claims on the Local State.

The empirical study examines the regeneration activities of Glasgow District Council, more particularly the involvement of this institution in the European City of Culture event held during 1990. Glasgow, of course, is a city which suffered greatly from the demise of the older 'smokestack' industries in the United Kingdom. Further, Glasgow District Council's regeneration initiatives are widely regarded as among the most innovative and successful in the United Kingdom. During 1990 however, centred on the activities of a group called *Workers City*, Glasgow District Council was criticised for its approach to the City of Culture event. Set against this background, Glasgow's role as European City of Culture 1990 represents a good case study.

The argument which this thesis will explore is that in the controversy which was generated during 1990, vital clues about the cultural foundations of the Local State can be gained. The aim of this project then, is to evaluate the controversy which surrounded the European City of Culture

event, with the view to contributing to wider debates about the *cultural politics* of Urban Regeneration.

Thesis Structure

The thesis is written around fourteen chapters. These in turn can be regarded as structured around seven main themes. First, an effort is made in Chapter 1 to address a number of conceptual issues which the 'cultural turn' raises. The *methodological* approach adopted in the project is outlined in this Chapter. Second, in Chapters 2 and 3, the context within which the Glasgow case study is to be understood is outlined. Chapter 2 deals with theoretical literature on the Local State, whilst Chapter 3 examines relevant aspects Glasgow's history, including the events of 'Red Clydeside' and Glasgow Corporation's Housing Policy.

Third, Chapters 4 and 6 examine the regeneration activities which have been undertaken in Glasgow. Chapter 4 deals with events from 1977 to 1989. Chapter 6 examines the way the language of regeneration developed across this period manifested itself in the District Council's approach to the European City of Culture event in 1990. Since Chapter 6 deals with empirical material collected specifically for the thesis, it will be preceded by a methods (as opposed to *methodology*) Chapter (Chapter 5). This will detail the practical steps which were followed in the course of collecting data for the case study.

The remainder of the thesis deals with *four* issues over which debate took place during 1990. Fourth, in Chapters 7 to 11, debates about the cultural substance of the event will be outlined. Of the four issues, these debates are singled out for most attention. Chapter 7 examines *general* criticisms of the type of culture which was celebrated, whilst Chapter 8 examines the *specific* case of the Elspeth King Affair. 'Official' accounts of the cultural substance of the event are outlined in Chapter 9, and exemplified in more detail, through an analysis of three specific City of Culture projects, in Chapter 10. In Chapter 11, alternative arguments which were used by some Project Organisers and media commentators to deflect criticism are examined.

Chapters 12 to 14 deal with the other three areas of debate. Fifth, Chapter 12 examines the criticism that money spent on the event should have been spent on more needier causes. Sixth, Chapter 13 examines debates which focussed upon the morality of engaging in *image building*, when the local working classes were suffering severe hardships. Seventh, Chapter 14 deals with questions which were raised about the financial competence of officials of the event. All fourteen chapters are then brought together and conclusions drawn as to the nature of the *cultural politics* which took place in Glasgow during 1990.

CHAPTER 1 - CULTURAL THEORY : SOME IMPORTANT CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

1.1 Introduction

The *cultural turn* in Social Theory has been accompanied by the development of a new conceptual vocabulary.

Cultural theory is concerned with the 'forms of understanding', or 'interpretive schemas' which underpin different institutional(ised) practices. As such, attention must be given to the idea of 'interpretive schemas'. How can one best conceive of this notion ? What features should one look at when conducting an investigation of any specific practice ? In this chapter, attention will be focussed upon three concepts which have emerged as particularly important in this regard; the metaphor of the 'text', 'interpretive (linguistic) communities', and 'cultural politics'.

The remainder of the chapter examines the objectives and nature of cultural studies. Discussion is structured around three themes; what the *raison d'être* of cultural studies ought to be, how cultural projects go about producing knowledge and what status they claim for this knowledge, and the methodological strategy which was used in this thesis.

1.2 The metaphor of the 'text'

Much of the inspiration for recent developments within

cultural theory has come from the field of Literary Criticism, more particularly the tradition of post-structuralism (Eagleton 1983). Post-structuralism focusses upon the relationship which exists between the author and reader of a particular text. Stimulated by the seemingly pervasive nature of disagreements between 'experts' over the 'correct' reading of texts, post-structuralism takes a new approach to the resolution of conflict. Its basic principle is that contested readings of texts can never be resolved since conflict is inherent in the very act of reading.

In expanding upon this, post-structuralists point out that the work of a particular author is often grounded within contexts which are unavailable to the reader (Giddens 1987). Further, when readers approach a text, they often do so within contexts which are different from that in which the original piece was offered up. Given this, conflicts over the 'correct' reading of a text can be regarded as the consequence of the severing of that text from the initial context within which it was written.

Readers, of necessity, bring to texts a whole set of different experiences. It is only by doing so that sense can be made of texts. However, these experiences bring texts alive in ways which defy the author's original intentions. A Wilfred Owen poem, written within the context of the First World War, might be interpreted in a very

different way by a soldier fighting in the Gulf War. The implication of this is that meaning is best thought of as being *created* by the reader, rather than being inherent in the text. In this sense, post-structuralism points to the 'death of the author' and to the plurality of possible 'readings' of the same text which exist.

In making readers' background experiences central to the process of interpretation, post-structuralism seeks to 'deconstruct' the position from which readers speak. This term, taken from the work of French philosopher Jacques Derrida (Fraser 1989, Sampson 1990), encapsulates the implications of accepting that unitary readings of text cannot exist. Instead of entering debates over meaning with a view to establishing which position is correct, researchers are encouraged to *take apart* the different readings involved and to show the different contexts within which they are formulated.

These basic ideas are increasingly coming to be applied within the Social Sciences. Clifford Geertz (1983) has argued that the idea of the problematical status of readings of texts ought to be used in studies investigating the meanings people attach to social practices. Interpretations of social practices, he argues, are *similar* to readings of texts. As such, we might talk about the *metaphorical* significance of the notion of the 'text'. The concept takes on expanded meaning in this sense, being defined by Parker (1990 p193) as; 'delimited

tissues of meaning reproduced in any form which can be given an interpretative gloss'. Under this definition, 'speech, writing, non verbal behaviour, Braille, Morse Code, Semaphores, runes, advertisements, fashion systems, stained glass, architecture, tarot cards, and bus tickets', all emerge as forms of text (Parker 1990 p193).

Using this expanded definition, geographers have picked up on the metaphor too, and phrases such as 'landscape as text' (Cosgrove and Daniels 1988, Cosgrove 1990) and 'social practice as text' (Cosgrove and Jackson 1987, Barnes and Duncan 1992) can now be seen to be in vogue in the discipline. The emphasis in this thesis is upon the latter. More specifically, concern is with the application of the notion of 'deconstruction'. The intention is to 'take apart' the various 'forms of understanding' which secure legitimacy for the actions of the local state in areas undergoing regeneration.

1.3 Interpretive communities

To argue that readers import background experiences into their 'readings' of text can rapidly lead, as Judith Kenny (1992 p178) has recently pointed out, to a position of 'radical individualism'. This sees the possibility that there are as many readings of a text as there are readers. To overcome this, it is essential that the social and historical basis of readers' interpretive schemas are brought to attention (Cox 1981, Cosgrove 1983). Bound

up with post-structuralism is an explicitly anti-humanist stance. In contrast to traditional philosophical notions of the pure Cartesian Cogito, post-structuralism characterises consciousness as 'de-centred'. Whilst this thesis has many variants (see Giddens 1987), one can read it as an attempt to replace notions of pure individual experience with the idea that experiences are always mediated by culturally defined interpretive schemas. Individuals do not lie at the centre of their own consciousness. Consciousness is not the unmediated ground of experience.

Part of this argument is based upon the idea of 'shared experience'. Because individuals are often subject to similar institutional practices, the production of consciousness can be regarded as thoroughly 'social'. Marxist Literary Critic (among other things) Raymond Williams, is an advocate of this argument (see Jackson 1989, ch 2 for a summary). Williams' emphasis was upon the importance of the material conditions of existence in the production of consciousness (for example Williams 1973). Capitalist production was seen as subjecting individuals to similar sets of experiences. These experiences were considered to produce particular 'structures of feeling'. And it is these socially produced 'structures of feeling', which were thought to lie at the root of 'interpretation'.

In talking about culturally defined interpretive schemas however, it is also essential to recognise the importance of *language* in the formation of consciousness (Harré

1983). In contrast to the Humanists' emphasis upon language as a largely neutral vehicle for the expression of inner thought (phenomenological givens), post-structuralism points to the more active role language plays in the formation of the various 'forms of understanding' people hold. Language provides the 'interpretive schemas' through which readers approach and make sense of texts. People sharing the same language can be thought of as being part of an 'interpretive community' (Barnes 1992).

Learning a particular language then, involves more than learning to communicate. It entails being socialised into thinking about things in a certain way. Foucault develops such a philosophy of language through the the concept of *discourse* (Parker 1989). For Foucault, language actually 'forms that of which it speaks' rather than reflects it (see Parker 1989). Discourses, are *forms of rationalising* which are carried in language. They set the agenda for what constitutes *sensible* ways of thinking about particular phenomena.

In recognising the social and historical basis of 'interpretive schemas', nevertheless, it is essential to avoid the lapse into structural determinism. Inspired by Giddens' (1984) Theory of Structuration, some geographers have noted that whilst all thought has to be grounded in the specific historical and social circumstances of its creation, room has to be made within cultural geography

for active and thinking human beings (Ley 1981, Cosgrove 1983, Pred 1984, 1989, Jackson 1989). For Giddens, 'culture' does not exist as such, except in memory traces and its empirical instantiations (Giddens 1984 p17). Interpretive schemas therefore, unless drawn upon on a routine basis by conscious, thinking human beings, can eventually wither away and die. The notion of *agency* (as opposed to subjectivity) must be applied even in those instances when interpretive schemas are reproduced at the level of *practical consciousness*. Culture then, as noted above, both produces and is produced by human consciousness in a never ending process of *structuration*.

1.4 Cultural politics

In recognising that ultimate 'readings' of the meaning of social practices do not exist, and that different readings are shared by different interpretive communities, cultural theorists have at their disposal a conceptual vocabulary amenable to groups engaged in *political critique*. By applying the deconstructionist principle, cultural theory can 'de-naturalise' previously 'taken for granted' interpretive schemas. It can show that these schemas are specific to particular interpretive communities. Further, it can show that these communities themselves only came into existence at relatively recent historical junctures.

In line with these comments, it is possible to identify some quite sophisticated accounts in the literature, of

the *mechanics of cultural politics*. Giddens (1984) argues that particular interpretive communities (sharing what he calls Structures of Signification) are reproduced in practice through the workings of *moral gatekeepers* (or Structures of Legitimation). These moral gatekeepers are often concrete institutions (increasingly the institutions of the media) which 'promote', sometimes consciously, sometimes unconsciously, various interpretive schemas which function in the interests of the communities they represent. At one extreme, the viewpoint of any one community can achieve what Gramsci calls 'hegemonic status' (Thrift 1983). By this is meant the *reification* of the point of view in question such that it becomes part of *common-sense*.

At the other extreme however, when hegemonic status for one viewpoint is secured, this generally means the subordination of other interpretive communities (the relation being defined by Giddens as a Structure of Domination). The viewpoint of minority groups can appear *nonsensical* when set aside the dominant community. This irrationality will often be played upon by the dominant group in order to secure its position as legitimate. The task facing the minority group is to develop a vocabulary which is capable of persuading opponents to accept their point of view. This can only be achieved through discrediting the moral gatekeepers of other interpretive communities and establishing a new consensus, policed by new moral gatekeepers.

Bringing together these ideas of interpretive communities, moral gatekeepers, and relations of domination, it is useful to follow Giddens (1984 24) in concluding that Structures of Signification are always underlain by Structures of Legitimation and Structures of Domination.

1.5 Postmodernism and the *raison d'être* of cultural studies

Some authors, such as Peter Jackson, see in the field of cultural politics, the opportunity for academics to contribute to the creation of more 'progressive' forms of social organisation. This involves a self conscious *politicisation* of academic research. Attention ought to be given, it is argued, to groups who are culturally (as opposed to physically) subordinate. Research should be geared towards the deconstruction of the assumptions built into the dominant interpretive community. By reflecting upon the dilemmas faced by the oppressed, academic work should provide minority groups with a means to a critical voice.

Jackson's early work on 'scientific racism' and media representations of ethnic minorities (Jackson 1988, 1989 ch6) represents, *par excellence*, a practical manifestation of the potential contribution academics can make. His more recent work on social constructions of 'masculinity' represents a break with conventional cultural studies of representations of gender which tend to talk about the cultural foundations of patriarchal social relations from

the point of view of women. His general manifesto and its avowedly political orientation, lead him to consider the various ways in which 'man' as a category has been constructed historically. This exercise is undertaken with the view of raising male consciousness as to the steps which they (we) might take in the fight against patriarchal domination. Other examples of work which conceives of deconstruction as a tool for political critique, includes Celia Kitzinger's (1987) work on the social construction of Lesbian identity and Jacquie Burgess' research agenda on representations of the environment in the media (Burgess 1991).

In calling upon academics to take up explicitly political stances in their research, cultural studies immediately runs into a paradox. Taking inspiration from the metaphor of the text, cultural theory focusses upon the impossibility of providing 'correct' interpretations of social practices. Its task is to 'deconstruct' particular viewpoints, and to show that they make sense only within particular interpretive communities. However, in calling for research which takes up an explicitly political stance, cultural politics would appear to be veering in the direction of making claims about the moral virtues of one viewpoint in comparison to others. It would appear to be advocating reconstruction rather than *deconstruction*.

At this juncture, it is necessary to introduce the

concept of 'postmodernism'. Postmodernism has gained much publicity in the Social Sciences in recent times. Whilst confusion still surrounds its definition, it would appear that two distinct camps have now emerged making claims on the concept. First, within the deconstructionist tradition and based upon the early ideas of Lyotard (1984), one camp treats postmodernism as a cultural condition characterised by an intensification of the problematical status of 'representation'. This tradition posits the death of the meta-narrative (unitary readings of social practices) and suggests that the current era is characterised by a proliferation of highly fragmented, localised *conversations* (see Dear 1988 and Gregory 1989). Second, based upon Baudrillard's (1983) notion of 'cultural implosion', Debord's (1973) thesis of the Society of the Spectacle, and Lash's (1990) concept of 'de-differentiated regimes of signification', some theorists conceive of postmodernism as a shift in sensibility, from meaning and discourse to a more aesthetic relation with the world based upon the release of unconscious desire.

Concern here is with the first camp. It is immediately clear that notions of 'progress' and 'emancipation', which pervade overtly political cultural studies, sit uneasily with Lyotard's idea of the death of the meta-narrative. Postmodernism, as defined by Lyotard, would point to the inconsistency inherent in cultural politics. Cultural politics embraces post-structuralist's

relativist leanings yet still defends its right to take up the position of arbiter of what is and what is not 'oppressive'.

This criticism is a difficult one to deal with. Whilst not providing a solution, Habermas' work on *communicative rationality* offers a useful counter viewpoint. According to Habermas (1983) *modernism*, instead of being effaced by postmodernism, represents a project which still remains to be completed. Modernism is defined here in terms of the enlightenment goal of establishing universal truths, ethics, and judgements of beauty. This definition for Habermas is a pragmatic one however. For, as Lash (1990 134) points out, Habermas' conception of 'reason' is a thoroughly *post-enlightenment* one.

For Habermas, Lyotard's refusal to acknowledge the possibility of engaging in grand conversations, constitutes a politically irresponsible position. By not encouraging minority groups to articulate alternative voices, the real danger is that the *status quo* will come to dominate. The door will be left open to fascist elements to seize the moment. Given that Habermas is writing within the context of a continued Germanic sensitivity to the atrocities of the Third Reich, one can understand his concern. For Habermas then, dialogue between different interpretive communities (as opposed to Lyotard's *celebration of difference*) *ought* to be maintained.

A second point relates not to the morality of maintaining

communication, but to its *possibility*. Habermas points out that whilst postmodernism is correct in pointing to the difficulties involved in communicating across interpretive communities, it does not follow that communication is *impossible*. Interpretive communities are not *that* incommensurable. Further, given that postmodernism opens up communities to the position of 'others', if it is such a pervasive condition of culture as Lyotard argues, then communication ought to be more likely now than ever.

Following Habermas, the position adopted in this thesis is that postmodernism of the Lyotardian variety, is overly extreme in trivialising both the *need* for and *possibility* of establishing discussion between different interpretive communities. In line with the call to politicise academic work, research, it is submitted, should be fundamentally concerned with *conflict* over interpretation.

This means that research undertaken within the field of cultural studies should take one of two forms. First, researchers might set out not only to deconstruct existing interpretive communities, but to engage in ethical reflection with a view to reconstructing more emancipated forms of social organisation. In this case, researchers would themselves be playing the role of *moral gatekeepers*. The academy would have to be conceived of in this regard as being one cog in the wider *mechanics of cultural politics* (as outlined above).

Second, research might set out to investigate instances

when conflicts over meaning occur in practice. These conflicts provide ready made examples of two different interpretive communities engaging in dialogue. Usually, one community will dominate over another. The role of the academy in this context would be to show that alternatives to the dominant community exist. It would help 'empower' minority communities by providing them with a new means of promoting their position. The academy would certainly play a role in this context in terms of the *mechanics of cultural politics*. Nevertheless, it would not function as a moral gatekeeper as such. Moral power would continue to be held by actors in the communities involved in the conflict. Academia would simply function as 'enabler'.

There are arguments both for and against both of these positions. This project is written within the context of the latter. It sets out to examine debates which took place in Glasgow over the role of the local state in the regeneration of that city. The conflict over meaning which is examined took place between council officials (the dominant community) and local pressure groups, in particular a group called *Workers City* (one important voice of the powerless). By examining the nature of the dialogue which took place between these different communities, the intention is to draw attention to the fact that there is nothing neutral or inevitable about the regeneration activities being undertaken by Glasgow District Council. Whilst making sense within one interpretive community, the

activities of the council appear as *nonsense* when evaluated within the terms of reference of *other* communities.

1.6 Epistemology

Epistemology refers to the study of the production of knowledge. Central to epistemological reflection is the question of the status of the knowledge which is produced through research. What can be claimed for such knowledge ? By locating this work within the field of cultural studies, a number of epistemological implications directly follow. The purpose of this section is to clarify these implications.

It is useful to begin with the traditional distinction made in epistemological debate between 'subject' and 'object'. 'Subject' in this context means the researcher or the person who is making claims about the status of the knowledge which is being produced. 'Object' following on from this, represents the object of enquiry; that which knowledge is concerned with.

It is useful to think through the two research strategies open to cultural analysts identified in the above section. If cultural studies defines its goal to be the deconstruction of politically undesirable social practices, and the articulation of new 'forms of understanding', then we might argue that the object of enquiry is the social practice itself. Further, it can be suggested that since the analyst is deliberately taking up a position

with respect to that social practice, then subject and object are not separate. The researcher's reporting of the object is not a neutral one.

The goal of this project however, is to report on conflicts over meaning as they occur between different interpretive communities *in practice*. The object in this case is not the social practice as such, but the various social constructions of the practice which circulate among interpretive communities. In this case, we might raise the question of the extent to which subject and object are separate. Can the researcher simply report upon the positions held by different interpretive communities in a neutral way ?

In searching for an answer to this question, I want to develop two arguments. First, that the recent methodological transition within Human Geography, away from positivist methods and towards more qualitative research, is *suggestive* that research into social constructions of social practices *can truly* represent the 'object'. Second, that temptation to accept this argument must always be resisted and that the researcher's observations must be regarded as social constructions themselves. That is, epistemologically, research reports on social constructions of objects represent 'readings of readings'. Research reports therefore, are themselves open to deconstruction. They can be shown to be *sensible* only within certain (academic) interpretive communities.

Partly associated with the *cultural turn* in Social Theory, there has been something of a methodological transformation within Human Geography in recent years. The roots of this transformation are to be found in the disillusionment recorded in the late 1970s and early 1980s with the appropriateness of positivist methods in the analysis of human behaviour (Tuan 1978, Gregory 1978, Ley 1981, Buttimer 1983, Johnston 1983).

It can be observed from the outset that the very research question being addressed here (the discourses which underpin the local state) is embedded within a different research tradition from positivism. Positivists, approach the study of the local state from a different perspective, asking different questions to those asked within, and seeking to find answers to them using different methods. Because discussion in this chapter began 'in the middle' of the approach being adopted here, these differences cannot easily be outlined. Consequently, no effort will be made here to outline the basic tenets of the positivist doctrine. Clarifying how the approach taken here differs from the positivist tradition would involve considerable methodological discussion.

Nevertheless, without describing the tradition in its totality, it is useful here to note that one of the key aspects of positivism is its emphasis upon 'objectivity'. Methods have to be chosen which produce identical results irrespective of the people undertaking the research.

Replicability is a fundamental pre-requisite of positivism. The consequence of this has been that positivists place heavy emphasis upon more formal, structured methods of data collection, regarding softer methods as overly subjective. Quantification is preferred to qualitative methods.

The concern which has been registered about more formal, quantitative methods can usefully be outlined through a consideration of the problems associated with questionnaires. The chief criticism made against questionnaires relates to the extent to which they actually *structure* research findings at the *outset* of the research. Questionnaires are problematic in that they define what issues are to be discussed and what are to be ignored. Since drawn up by the interviewer, they end up saying more about the issues the researcher thinks are important as opposed to the subject under investigation. Further, by asking respondents to express opinions on a numerical scale, some questionnaires set the agenda not only regarding what is to be discussed, but the language within which the respondent is to reply. Again, whether this language is the one the subject feels comfortable with is not given consideration.

What both these points highlight, is that research within the positivist tradition might be thought of as being conducted within the terms of reference of interpretive communities in academia. Since the language used in these communities differs from that used in the interpretive

communities under investigation, the attempt to communicate information inevitably breaks down. Academics produce contorted 'readings' of those under study, which say more about themselves than the communities they are trying to represent. In the case of positivist research then, one sees the subject-object distinction collapse. Researchers, because of the inappropriateness of their techniques, construct the object of enquiry rather than reflecting, neutrally, upon it.

In response to this problem, many researchers have become interested in the 'softer' research strategies which positivists dismiss for being 'subjective'. Perhaps the most extreme examples of these strategies are to be found in the tradition of ethnography. Whilst not strictly speaking an ethnographic approach, the methodology adopted herein has affinities with this tradition. It is consequently useful to outline the ethnographer's response to the positivist's emphasis upon structured research methods.

In advocating an ethnographic approach for anthropological investigation, Clifford Geertz (1983) points to the need to evolve research strategies which penetrate into the heart of the community under investigation. Ethnography essentially entails getting down to earth and 'seeing' the world from the point of view of those under investigation (the process of Verstehen). The trivial and 'taken for granted' in cultures of which researchers are largely ignorant, are targeted for particular attention. Through 'deep immersion'

into the lives of these groups, research is geared towards the production of 'thick description'. Analysis is judged according to the richness of the material generated.

The virtue of ethnography is that it calls upon researchers to 'speak' the language of those under investigation. Researchers should allow topics of investigation to emerge from field research. They should be defined by the community under investigation. Further, the researcher should attempt to talk about such issues *within* the language of the community. Both what is talked about, and how it is talked about, should be defined by the community rather than the researcher. Consequently, more unstructured methods such as participant observation and open ended interviews become important.

One sees in Geertz's ethnography the image of the researcher progressively becoming socialised into seeing the world through the eyes of the interpretive community under investigation. Through deep involvement with those under study, researchers attempt to gain a level of 'mutual knowledge' which will allow them to become *part* of the interpretive community (Giddens 1987). Instead of trying to 'read' into a community using the more structured methods positivists promote, academics are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the language of the community itself.

Derived from this, Derek Gregory (1989), in advocating the use of the ethnographic method in geography, has recently

called for geographers to re-appraise the style in which they write. If ethnography means learning to speak in the 'native tongue', and if a plurality of cultures exist, then how, Gregory asks, can a uniform style of writing research hope to capture all the nuances of the communities we want to describe? In place of the conventional academic report then, geographers have to be much more adventurous about the way in which they write.

This movement away from positivist methods and towards softer, ethnographic type research, is surely motivated by a concern to better represent those under investigation. Positivist methods fail to penetrate into the community. They give only superficial accounts of the culture under investigation; saying more about what the researcher expected to find than what is really there. Ethnography, in contrast, provides more 'accurate' accounts. By encouraging a sensitivity to the nuances of interpretive communities, by allowing those communities to speak through the researcher, more 'accurate' information can be gained. Epistemologically therefore, ethnography is *suggestive* of a separation between subject and object. The researcher does not construct the object under investigation, it constructs the researcher. Consequently, a faithful representation of the object *can* be made.

It is now necessary to develop the second argument noted above however. The paradox in all this material of course,

is that a sensitivity to the cultural genre under scrutiny has in the end to be tempered by the seemingly intractable problem that we are academics and we do 'come at' the things we study from language communities which cannot easily be shaken off. As Susan Smith (1988) has recently argued, one of the main aims of research is to write out an account which will be the subject of scrutiny from peers. This means that instead of speaking within the 'native tongue' of those under investigation, academics are forced to 'read' the communities they investigate in a way which is acceptable to the academy.

Kuhn's (1962) theory on the nature of 'scientific revolution' is widely cited as a benchmark text in this regard (see Johnston 1983). Kuhn suggested that all scientists work within 'paradigms'. As Masterman (1970) notes, this term remained ill defined within Kuhn's text. In some instances, the word appeared to refer to the set of methods a group of researchers use. In others, it refers to a core work which sets a research agenda and which is constantly appealed to by the community. In general nevertheless, we might say that a paradigm is a particular framework within which researchers define their research goals and methodologies. For the most part, research is done within the paradigm. This Kuhn referred to as a period of 'normal science'. From time to time however, new research questions would be produced which would not be able to be addressed properly within the terms of reference of the paradigm. Through time, such anomalies would build up and ultimately one paradigm could

be overthrown in favour of another. This constituted a period of scientific revolution. Until the next crisis arose, a period of normal science would once again return.

The importance of Kuhn's thesis lies in its suggestion that research is inconceivable outwith particular paradigms. Further, paradigms were considered to define what was acceptable to be researched and how research was to proceed. Both what is looked at, and the way it is looked at is peculiar to the paradigm worked in. All observation is theory laden. The cultural foundations then, of the interpretive schemas researchers carry into their analysis, are to be found in the paradigm into which they are socialised.

This idea has been extended in a number of directions by geographers. Barnes (1992) provides a useful account, in this context, of the growing recognition of the importance of *metaphors* in academic theorising (see also Harrison and Livingston 1982). Basing his case on the work of Mary Hesse, Barnes argues that the interpretive communities which exist within academia can be delineated according to the various metaphors they use in their explanation of phenomena. In confronting empirical reality, researchers are suggested to adopt 'coping strategies' by which they draw upon their experiences in previous settings to make sense of the 'here and now'. What is currently observed is recognised to be *similar* to some other event. This similarity results in the importation

of the original idea and its application in the form of a metaphor to the new phenomena. As such 'scientific revolutions', Barnes (1992 p121) argues, are 'nothing more than metaphorical revolutions'.

In developing these ideas, I want to argue that writing research within the canons set down by the 'paradigm' of cultural studies, or that community which shares the metaphor of the text, places a number of responsibilities on the researcher. These responsibilities prevent the application of the ethnographic approach in the full blown way advocated by Derek Gregory (1989), and indeed undermine to some extent the basic rationale of the softer approaches per se.. They result in an epistemological position which regards subject and object as interlinked. Research reports do not tell the story of what really happened, but must be regarded as actively constructing the events under scrutiny.

According to softer research strategies therefore (like ethnography), researchers ought to socialise themselves into the interpretive communities under study. For Gregory, this means that reports ought to be written in the 'native tongue'. Cultural studies, however, demand more of researchers. They call upon researchers to deconstruct interpretive communities. To deconstruct a community is to make sense of its 'sense making' *from the outside*.

As Potter et al. (1990) point out, interpretive schemas or

discourses do not actually exist in practice. Instead, one finds fragments of interpretive schemas, mobilised to suit the particularities of context. A central feature of deconstruction therefore, is to move from discussion of 'arguments' as they are used in practice, to a consideration of the wider interpretive schemas of which they are part. That is, establishing the line of reasoning being used without saturating discussion with referential features specific to the empirical event under study. This however, Potter et al. argue, must inevitably involve theoretical abstraction on the behalf of the analyst.

It is at this point that the event being studied begins to be socially constructed. For the process involved is more than one of abstraction. As Potter (1988) points out, abstraction is a messy process. It is not simply an exercise in induction. When trying to deconstruct an interpretive community, the analyst constantly has to move back and forth from the empirical material, to the abstract concept. The abstract concept is both emerging from the empirical material, and at the same time constituting the way that material 'looks'.

Compounding the importance of the deductive element of this process is the fact that once concepts begin to emerge, analysts find it useful to draw upon theoretical literature. This material can assist in gaining confidence that the debate is being 'read' properly. For instance, in studying the debates which took place in

Glasgow during 1990, literature on Glasgow's history and theories of the local state were examined. When sense was being made of the empirical material, it was useful to ask; does it make sense to 'read' the debate in this way, given the context within which the literature suggests all of this is taking place?

The implication of these observations is that cultural studies must accept the inherently *constructive* nature of research. Unlike full blown ethnography, where one endeavours to insert oneself into the *code*, and to speak in the 'native tongue', cultural studies seek to step outside the community, and rationalise about *its logic*. This rationalisation takes place from a position. This position is a mixture of concepts abstracted from early contact in the field, and theoretical literature. Epistemologically, therefore, research reports represent social constructions of the event under enquiry.

1.7 Methodology

To finish this chapter, it is useful to develop the somewhat abstract concepts outlined above in a more practical way, by highlighting the methodological strategy which was used in this project. Certainly, this strategy draws inspiration from the softer research strategies mentioned above. One cannot refer to it as an ethnographic approach as such, although it seeks to do research in the spirit of this tradition. Full blown

ethnography, as practiced in Anthropology, requires a more *holistic* strategy than that adopted herein. The lives of the key actors under investigation outwith their involvement with the local state would have to be studied for a project such as this to be termed ethnographic.

Nevertheless, the basic goal of becoming socialised into the communities under investigation through intensive field immersion, and the writing of 'thick description', remain as key goals. Recognising the importance of the social constructionist epistemology nevertheless, we will refer to the methodology adopted herein as an *interpretive approach*. The 'thick description' offered represents a reading on my own behalf, and one that is open to deconstruction by the reader.

Broadly speaking, six methodological stages can be identified :

1) Having gained an understanding of the three concepts central to the cultural literature (noted above), it was decided to apply them in an empirical analysis of the institution of the local state. At this point, I was aware that one area in which local government is active in is Urban Regeneration. I was also aware that Glasgow District Council is a 'recognised leader' in the area of urban regeneration. During 1990, Glasgow District Council's main regeneration activity was the hosting of the City of Culture event. Consequently, it was decided to examine

the regeneration activities of Glasgow District Council, making specific reference to the City of Culture event.

My concern was to trace out the major conflicts which were taking place in the city. It was hoped that by deconstructing these conflicts, that is, showing the competing logics through which the event was being constructed, an understanding of the cultural politics of the role of the local state in urban regeneration could be gained.

2) This meant that the first stage in the exercise was to 'immerse' myself in the various debates which were taking place in the city over the event. The ethnographic method proved the guiding light here. Attention was given to debates as they occurred in practice. That is, an effort was made to become socialised into thinking within the terms of reference of the different communities involved in the debate. This involved firstly, identifying the key actors involved in the conflict, and secondly, becoming familiar with their arguments by;

a) speaking to and working with them directly and attending meetings at which they spoke (see Chapter 5).

b) examining media coverage, including radio interviews and publications from the leading actors (see Chapter 5).

From this phase, two main groups emerged as central to the debates. First, officials of the District Council appeared to represent one interpretive community, making

sense of the event in a particular way. Focussed around a group called *Workers City* however, another interpretive community manifested itself. This group emerged as the chief critic of the event. It vigorously contested the interpretation of the event officials were advancing.

3) In the early phases of field immersion, an effort was made to establish what the core issues were. What was the nature of debate ? This essentially involved pulling all data which had been collected together and trying to organise it for the first time. Some impression was gained at this stage of the different 'forms of understanding' both officials and *Workers City* were using.

4) As a consequence of these early impressions, an effort was made to gain a better idea of the context within which the District Council was acting. This involved firstly, reading theoretical literature on the local state. What were other studies telling me about this institution, especially the types of pressures it was under in the context of urban decline? Secondly, an effort was made to situate Glasgow District Council's activities within the broader historical context of the evolution of municipal consciousness in the city.

The value of gathering this contextual information was that it allowed better sense to be made of the initial impressions gained in the field. It allowed confidence to be placed upon some aspects, whilst casting doubt upon others. By going backwards and forwards between the

empirical material and the literature, interpretations of the nature of the debates taking place were sharpened.

5) This process of 'honing' influenced the collection and analysis of further empirical material. In particular, it was decided to study some 18 additional groups, the majority of whom were involved in the City of Culture celebrations. The choice of these groups was heavily influenced by the categories of thought which had emerged from reflection on the early field experience and the literature. In particular, groups were chosen in the hope that they would yield deeper insight into the two interpretive communities which appeared to be emerging; those of officials and Workers City. Of course, the process was dialectical, and the categories carried into the analysis of these groups were reformed in the light of the analysis of the 18 groups. As noted above, the process of trying to capture the nature of contestations over meaning is a messy business, involving both induction and deduction simultaneously.

6) The end result of this process was a recognition that debate took place over four separate issues in Glasgow during 1990; the cultural substance of the City of Culture event, the relative emphasis being placed upon cultural as opposed to housing expenditure, the morality of image building projects, and the financial competence of officials. These four areas of debate in turn, were interpreted through reference to the concepts of *urban*

entrepreneurialism and *urban managerialism*. These concepts both derived from the field material, and partly constituted the actual identification of the four areas of debate. Having abstracted from empirical reality, an effort has now been made to write a final report acceptable given the canons set down by the new Centurions of Cultural Geography.

1.8 Summary

The purpose of this chapter has been to clarify some important conceptual matters which derive from the *cultural turn* in Social Theory. Three concepts were recognised to be central to cultural studies; the *metaphor of the text*, the notion of *interpretive communities*, and *cultural politics*.

The remainder of the chapter examined how research ought to be conceived of within the new tradition. The debate between postmodernism and those advocating a politicisation of research was outlined. It was pointed out that this study situates itself within the tradition that sees deconstruction as a tool for political critique. By studying the contests over meaning which took place in Glasgow during 1990, the contribution this project will attempt to make to this end, will be the promotion of one voice of *the other* in urban regeneration. Epistemologically, it was then argued that whilst softer research methods are superior to the positivist's emphasis upon more structured

methods in gaining insight into interpretive communities, research must always be regarded as *socially constructing* the object of enquiry. The knowledge produced through research always represents a reading from within an (academic) *interpretive community*. Finally, six methodological principles were outlined.

In the sections on epistemology and methodology, it was pointed out that drawing upon literature to set the context within which a particular debate is to be understood is a central feature of cultural studies. Given this, the next two chapters will document the context within which the Glasgow case study has been approached.

In Chapter 2, theories of the local state will be examined. In Chapter 3, some historical background to recent events in Glasgow will be presented.

CHAPTER 2 - CONCEIVING OF THE LOCAL STATE IN AREAS UNDERGOING REGENERATION

2.1 Introduction

In setting the context within which the role of the local state in urban regeneration is to be understood, it is necessary to examine firstly, the concept of the 'State' itself. This will be undertaken in section 2.2 where specific mention will be made of that form of state organisation often referred to as 'Fordist Keynesianism'. According to many authors, Fordist Keynesianism has been a dominant state form in most capitalist economies in the post-war era. This said, a number of authors have noted that it has been in decline somewhat since the mid 1970s (Harvey 1989a).

This decline is tied into the demise of the industrial bases of the older industrial conurbations in the western world. This decline will be considered in section 2.3. The local state, deeply embedded within the Fordist Keynesian model, has been subject to restructuring as a consequence of decline. The altered fortunes of the Fordist Keynesian model therefore, and the resulting altered powers of the local state, provides a first context within which recent developments are to be understood. This argument will be expanded upon in section 2.4.

Further, in the midst of industrial decline the local state has itself increasingly become more concerned with

local capitalist accumulation. Intervention in local economies has been a definitive feature of the local state across the 1980s in the United Kingdom. This constitutes a somewhat radical shift in the *raison d'être* of local government, and has served to generate a whole new politics of the locality. From providing services to the community, the local state is now seen by Left Wing critics as an agent of capital. This shift in role will be examined in section 2.5.

Finally, from being just part of the wider Fordist Keynesian system and its politics, localities are now themselves becoming separate sites of political activity, as a consequence of the restructuring of the sphere of activity of the local state. Surrounding change is a whole series of debates about what the local state 'ought' to be doing. As noted in the introduction, the thesis this project is exploring is that it is precisely in these debates that vital clues can be gained *vis-à-vis* the cultural foundations of the local state. A key point about the turn by the state to local accumulation strategies, which sets the context for consideration of these debates, is that the type of discourse built into the Fordist Keynesian model, which served to bring capital and the community into a compromise, is not appropriate at the local level in the United Kingdom. Consequently, now is a time when new terms of reference for state intervention in the economy are being created. A new cultural politics is emerging within which the *proper* role of the local state

is being redefined (section 2.6).

2.2 The Capitalist State : the local state under Fordist Keynesianism

Let us begin then, with a consideration of the idea of the state in general. The operation of the state in most Western Capitalist Economies cannot be understood without reference to class conflict both around the means of production and elsewhere. Capitalism as a system rests upon individual striving. Individuals with ideas about what people might want to buy set about 'making' that commodity. To do so they must turn to the labour of others for assistance. The essence of the capitalist social relation however, is that the value accrued to the capitalist from the sale of the commodity is greater than that offered to labour as recompense. The difference between labour's wage and the capitalist's income is referred to by Marxists as the 'surplus value' extracted from the production process (Johnston 1988).

Framing his analysis within Marxist language, David Harvey (1982) points out that even when stated in this bald way, a number of contradictions appear within the system of capitalist accumulation, which raise doubts about its ability to reproduce itself over a long time period. Perhaps the two most fundamental problems are the tendency for capitalism to overaccumulate, and the difficulty it faces in retaining mass loyalty from the labouring class

(the problem of reproducing labour power). Harvey (1989a p180) defines overaccumulation as 'a condition in which idle capital and idle labour supply exist side by side with no apparent way to bring these idle resources together to accomplish socially useful tasks'. Precisely how this problem arises and the measures which can be taken to overcome it are clearly open to substantial debate. Nevertheless, one can understand overaccumulation as a problem arising when the amount of fixed capital available to produce a certain good is disproportionately large in comparison to the market for that product.

The second problem relates to the essentially exploitative nature of the capitalist social relation at the point of production. Clearly, generating surplus value is contingent upon capitalists keeping wages low. This is especially because competition between different capitals for the one market often results in cheap labour being the vital ingredient in ensuring competitive edge. However, low wages also breeds poverty and when this becomes conspicuous, the 'greed' which surrounds the extraction of surplus value can inflame class consciousness among the labouring classes. The problem for the capitalist then is to persuade (or coerce) labour into participating in the system. From labour's point of view, the task is to reduce exploitation as much as possible and improve the quality of life of workers. The ensuing class struggle is described by Harvey (1989a p180) as 'fundamental to the

trajectory of capitalist development'.

It is against this albeit simplistic backdrop that many analyses of the role of the state are situated. In this section attention will be diverted to what some people have referred to as the Fordist Keynesian welfare state which supposedly achieved hegemonic status in the UK and beyond from 1945 until recently (Harvey 1989a, Jessop 1990 ch 7). The language used herein is drawn mainly from the emerging school of thought known as 'Regulation Theory' which has been pioneered by Aglietta (1979). Fordist Keynesianism, at least according to regulation theorists, was successful precisely because it provided a compromise between capital and labour which was both able to assure that the problem of overaccumulation was avoided, and that both sides were united behind one *territorial based ideology*.

It is useful to begin with the above distinction made between accumulation and the reproduction of labour power. Cox (1991) refers to this distinction as the contradiction between the drive by capitalists to increase surplus value (accumulation), and the need for capitalists to secure the capital/labour relation as legitimate. The chief character of the Keynesian welfare state he argues, is its commitment to ensuring that both the accumulation and legitimation problems are solved (or to use his term, *suspended*) by bringing capital and labour to some kind of compromise. Through taxation, capital contributes to a consumption fund for labour, which is redistributed by the state in the form of

items of collective consumption such as schools, housing, health services, roads, public facilities, etc. Further, through legislation, the state guarantees labour certain rights regarding their role in the production process (the right to strike, health and safety measures, social security benefits if unemployed, a minimum wage in some countries etc). In return however, the basic principle of production for private profit is guaranteed. In this way, class conflict can be suspended at least for a period of time.

Both related to and part of this redistribution of wealth was a Fordist system of production. This was predicated upon intensive productivity increases or growth, brought about by increased mechanisation and the implementation of Scientific Management Principles (Taylorism). These productivity increases ushered in a new era of mass production. And as mass production proceeded, so too did mass consumption. If the second problem noted above however, that of the tendency for capitalism to overaccumulate, was to be contained, then a market for mass produced goods had to be available. It is here that the wage rises, unemployment benefits secured by the welfare state, and spending by the state itself in the form of wages and on capital investments, proved to be crucial. For the constant flow of money back to the labouring classes ensured that sufficient purchasing power was available to support the mass consumption of goods running off the Fordist assembly lines.

The Fordist Keynesian welfare state then, was predicated upon growing productivity rates among capitals, and growing living standards for labour (see Harvey, 1989a pp130-131). The reproduction of labour power was secured through the provision of a workers' consumption fund, and increased surplus value for capital was guaranteed through the purchasing power held by the masses. Extending this general picture, Cox (1991) notes that the Fordist Keynesian welfare state, thus conceived, was fundamentally *territorial* in character. It was a 'one nation project' which attempted to confine class conflict within particular countries, and to make politics a contest between countries. Success was defined in terms of the ability of a country to record high productivity rates (witness the many 'league tables' of GDP per capita) and improved living standards.

The territorial character of the project derived in large part from the fact that international trade was important in guaranteeing increased surplus value for capitals in any single country. This was because some of the wealth which was redistributed through the welfare state was being used not to fund the mass consumption of capitalist goods, but to provide welfare for labour which essentially amounted to 'dormant' capital. Consequently, on each round money was being lost out of the system. Income from 'abroad' was crucial in ensuring that a wide enough market for mass produced goods existed. Consequently, keeping the country competitive internationally came to be seen as an important

goal.

To understand the full significance of this, it is useful to reproduce Cox's (1989, 1991) argument that with the arrival of the state, the accumulation/legitimation problem built into capitalism becomes internalised into the state where it appears as a contradiction between 'revenue and votes'. By this Cox means, the state as a guarantor of accumulation is put under pressure by capitals to reduce taxation levels, whilst as an agent of the community and reliant upon votes for its existence, it is equally pressurised to enlarge the workers' consumption fund. The state then, is put in the position of being responsible for finding an acceptable compromise.

However, given that increased growth among capitals is essential if it is to be able to build up a workers' consumption fund, and that international trade is important to this growth, in the final analysis the state is under pressure to side with capital and ensure that firms are kept internationally competitive. It is at this point that the ideology of the capitalist state becomes obvious. Wealth redistribution is on the agenda, however this has to be tied to the successful procurement of profit among local businesses. To the extent that businesses are in decline then so too is the workers' consumption fund. If the workers' consumption fund is retained whilst businesses are doing bad, then the danger is that firms could cease to trade at all. Capitalist

activity then, is not only preserved within the Fordist/Keynesian system, it proves to be its primary engine;

'A necessary precondition for this type of growth has been the hegemonic role of an ideology of growth. Appealing to widely held interests in enhanced consumption, this belief made its historic entry in the post war recovery... Increased consumption it is argued, is dependent upon continuing economic growth. Growth depends on profit. If wages increase relative to profit then growth will be undermined and thus so will increased consumption. Appetites for increased consumption need therefore to be controlled and a correct order of national priorities retained.'

(Cox 1989 p69)

The important point to note about this ideology of growth, is that it provided a language within which state action which was exclusively concerned with capital accumulation could be legitimated. By tying the workers' consumption fund to capitalist accumulation the state could be seen to be acting in the interests of both capital and the community, when it intervened to stimulate growth. The territorial character of the project therefore functioned to legitimate state concern for the health of capitals.

This contrasts markedly with the case of the recent economic intervention by the local state, where growth and the workers' consumption fund are not so obviously tied to the territorial unit under consideration. It is for this reason that it will be argued below that the Fordist Keynesian discourse which generates consensus vis á vis state concern with accumulation cannot be reapplied in the

case of the local state. Consequently, the path is left open at present for new discursive frameworks to come into existence.

The picture emerging therefore is of a number of countries trying to implement separate welfare programmes, each of which is reliant upon a good national performance of their industries to ensure that sufficient wealth has been created to allow a redistribution to take place. The state, positioned in all of this, is seen as trying to mediate the nation's collective consumption demands whilst at the same time not placing too big an albatross around the necks of capitals such that they fail to accrue sufficient levels of surplus value to justify trading. The ideology of growth defined welfare provision is the means through which the state is seen as resolving the tension between revenue and votes, and thus uniting separate classes in an inter-territorial rather intra-territorial conflict.

It is necessary however, at this juncture, to specify more precisely the question of the scale at which inter-territorial conflict is fought out. For this opens up preliminary insights into the role of the local state within the Fordist Keynesian system. Thus far it has been at the level of individual nation states that the accumulation/legitimation contradiction has been suggested to have been suspended. However, it is clear that within most nations there exist sub-national state agencies, both

subject to democratic control and with revenue raising powers. It might be questioned as to the importance of these levels of the state.

It is useful to begin here with Saunders (1981) well known thesis that in the United Kingdom context, local and regional governments perform different roles from that of the national government. Drawing upon the work of Manuel Castells (1977), Saunders' suggests that whilst the national government is crucial in arbitrating a corporatist politics between capital and labour around the means of production, the role of the local state is more geared towards the politics of consumption. It is at the centre that all the important decisions vis-à-vis setting tax levels and deciding upon the magnitude of the workers' consumption fund are made. A class based politics is therefore associated with the centre. In contrast, the role of local branches of the state is simply that of discharging a consumption fund, produced mainly at the centre. A politics develops at the local level around a number of cleavages (who is to get the money ?), however, rarely is this class based.

Immediately, one can see a number of problems with Saunders' claim. First, it is possible to identify a number of local branches of the state which have directly played a role in the production process. New Town Development Corporations for instance, have been active in providing firms with incentives to relocate since at least 1946. The Scottish and Welsh Development Agencies, as well

as the Highlands and Islands Development Board, are further examples of subnational state units charged with the responsibility of intervening in local economies. So one can suggest that it is not the case that it is only at the centre that the state takes to do with accumulation.

A second and more fundamental criticism has been advanced by Duncan and Goodwin (1988 p35). They suggest that to imply that the centre is mainly concerned with assuring accumulation whilst the local state is motivated out of the need to legitimate capitalism by discharging a consumption fund, is to ignore the importance of consumption variables in reproducing labour power and thus accumulation. Further, road construction is a service to the local community provided by the local state. However, it cannot be denied that its commercial uses are vital to capitalist accumulation.

Nevertheless, bearing these reservations in mind, Saunders' recognition of a division of labour between local and central branches of the state provides a useful benchmark for comparative analysis with other countries. Cox (1991) takes up this challenge by trying to compare the picture of the UK set by Saunders with the United States case. His analysis suggests that sub national state agencies in the United States are substantially more active in formulating accumulation strategies than those in the United Kingdom. In particular, he argues that taxation powers and workers' rights issues are devolved to

regional and local levels to a much greater degree in the United States than in the UK. Whilst in the United Kingdom it is primarily left to central government to suspend the accumulation/legitimation contradiction, the local state plays a much more active role in this suspension in the United States.

In explaining this observation, Cox refers to both the level of uneven development in the United States, and to the greater local dependency of capital. Using Duncan and Goodwin's (1988) argument that the material bases for the local state lies in the geographically uneven way in which capitalist societies develop, Cox argues that uneven development in the US is far greater than in the United Kingdom. This is not surprising of course, given the different geographical scales involved. The consequence is he suggests, that local areas have been loathe to hand over powers to the national state tier regarding economic development for fear that they would then not be able to impose regulations which are best suited to their specific conditions.

The second argument advanced by Cox is that firms in the United States are much more dependent upon the success of their local economies than those in the United Kingdom. This represents an improvement of the initial position Cox and Mair (1988) put forward in which a strong local dependency was suggested to be a characteristic of all capitalist economies. Banks in the United States Cox



points out, have traditionally only been able to operate in locally defined areas. This has resulted in them getting involved in efforts to stimulate local business activity since their own profits depend upon it.

Similarly, Utility Companies (gas, water, electricity) have generally had to invest heavily in particular places with the hope of recouping money only over a long time period. Stimulating a healthy local economy has been in their interests too. It is consequently not surprising to find that Wood (1991) notes that banks and utility companies have traditionally been at the forefront of local growth coalitions in United States cities. This strong local dependency is absent in the UK Cox suggests.

The importance of distinguishing between the United States and United Kingdom cases can be seen if we return to the above comments vis-à-vis how state intervention in the accumulation process secures legitimacy. It was suggested that the Fordist Keynesian compromise, premised upon an ideology of growth related welfare provision, provided a discursive framework within which state concern for accumulation could be legitimated. It was also pointed out however, that the circumstances within which the local state operates precludes the application of this discourse in the legitimation of local state concern for local accumulation.

It now becomes apparent that this partially has to do with the fact that the local state in the United Kingdom

operates mainly as part of the wider application of the Fordist Keynesian logic at the territorial level of the nation state. If Cox's argument is correct however, then perhaps the significant role played by the locality in the United States in the suspension of the accumulation/legitimation contradiction means that Fordist Keynesian discourse is still applicable in the legitimation of local state intervention in the United States. This is an observation which will be expanded upon below.

2.3 Economic downturn in the older industrial conurbations

The intention of this section is to document the changing industrial geography in the United Kingdom which has resulted in the decline of the older industrial hearths. It is necessary to reflect upon the post-war restructuring of the United Kingdom's space economy at this point as it has had profound effects upon the operation of the Fordist Keynesian state since the mid 1970s. Further, it has set the scene for the parallel restructuring of the role of the local state which has characterised the 1980s. For the present purposes, it is not necessary to launch into a theoretical account of the changes which have occurred. Nevertheless, to set the scene it is useful to refer briefly to the more abstract postulations of geographers such as Harvey (1982) and Massey (1984) which have informed discussions of change.

Harvey's (1982) theoretical treatise sets out to integrate space into traditional Marxian accounts of the social relations around the means of production. Harvey argues that class relations around the means of production result in certain geographical configurations of capitalist development. The way production organises itself across space reflects geographical unevenness in the factors affecting profitability (mainly for Harvey the capital-labour relation). However, as capitalists seek to expand profits, they invariably have to find new locations in which to produce. This then creates a new geography of production which overlays the previous configuration. Space has to be produced anew.

Given that any one configuration represents massive capital investment, the problem for the capitalist is to decide the point in time at which it is more profitable to write geography anew. The old pattern represents, therefore, a constraint upon that which is subsequently overlaid. Geography is nevertheless ceaselessly being remade under Harvey's schema, as capitalism forever searches for profitable new pastures.

Massey's (1984) hallmark thesis is similar to Harvey's in as much as it talks about layers of capital investment being written over by new waves of development. Nevertheless it tends to be more grounded in the sense that it is developed with specific reference to the changes in the older industrial conurbations in the

United Kingdom. Massey argues that the geography of production reflects strategies firms develop for the spatial division of labour they require. These strategies imbue regions in the United Kingdom with certain social characteristics (related to the different occupations available in different parts of the country). Through time however, different spatial strategies will emerge which create new geographies of production. Regions are positioned through time in different ways within the overall system. Like Harvey however, Massey indicates that previous characteristics of regions inform future roles ascribed by capital.

The emphasis within Harvey and Massey's accounts then, is upon the varying geographical patterns of production which derive from major switches in strategies for the spatial division of labour. Hudson (1988) provides a useful empirical typology of different spatial divisions of labour which have derived from major switches in thinking about the use of space in the extraction of surplus value. He begins by arguing that events since 1940 have resulted in the writing of several new geographies of production over an older spatial division of labour. This older division had three major characteristics. First, it involved the production of clothes in a number of textiles factories. Secondly, it involved the extraction of primary minerals such as coal around locations with deposits of such resources. Related, such industries as metal manufacturing, and

chemicals were born. These locations grew into what today are called the older industrial conurbations. Finally, it was characterised by the Fordist factory turning out consumer durables in mainly urban locations.

Geographically, areas could be distinguished in this older era by the type of industry in which they specialised.

Since 1940 however, Hudson points out, new spatial strategies for dividing production have written over this older genre. In Massey's words, new rounds of investment have served to overlay a new geography of production on a landscape which was previously carved out by other strategies for the spatial division of labour. Hudson begins by noting that conventionally, Frobel et al's (1980) thesis has been drawn upon to suggest that central to the new strategies has been an internationalisation of production. This has involved spatially dividing various parts of the overall production process, and the production process per se., from its administration. Third world countries with cheap labour supplies have been the recipient of production processes previously undertaken in the older industrial conurbations. This has created it is argued, a 'new international division of labour' in which advanced capitalist economies (in particular a number of major financial centres in these economies (London, New York, Tokyo etc) have acted as the command and control centres over production sites located in more

peripheral and underdeveloped parts of the world.

Hudson notes that whilst important, this thesis has to be qualified by an understanding that there exists a plurality of additional spatial strategies which are serving to superimpose a new geography of capitalist production upon the older pattern. Particularly relevant in this context has been the strategy amongst chemical plants and metal manufacturing plants in the 1950s and 1960s to concentrate in major complexes in coastal locations.

This has been an activity characteristic of both state owned industries and private capital throughout Western Europe. It has stemmed in part from the need to achieve economies of agglomeration and the increased reliance placed upon imported raw materials. Whilst not resulting in an internationalisation of production previously undertaken in the United Kingdom, it nevertheless has further removed industrial activity undertaken in some of the older industrial conurbations.

Hudson's observations relate mainly to strategies for dividing production spatially within capitalist economies in Western Europe. An area which he misses out in this regard is the impact of the economic development of the Newly Industrialising Countries (NIC's) on Western European countries. The rapid growth rates achieved in countries such as Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan etc, has been noted by a number of authors (Dicken 1986). However, what is

still unknown is the extent to which these countries have taken over markets previously cornered by industries in the older industrial regions. The possibility clearly exists that the success of these other parts of the world has forced rationalisation on the older industrial areas (perhaps along the lines of Massey's three rationalisation strategies, 1984). Once more, the fact that countries are now wedded to one another via dense economic relationships is the point worth noting. The success of one part of the world has implications for all others.

From analyses such as those of Harvey, Massey, and Hudson, it can be readily appreciated that new spatial organisations of production are currently being produced which are bypassing the older industrial regions whose fortunes were made during previous rounds of capitalist accumulation. Older industrial areas are taking up new and largely subordinate roles within the emerging globally integrated forms of production.

In highlighting the extent to which cities in the United Kingdom have suffered, it is useful to refer to Hausner's (1987) summary of work conducted on behalf of the Economic and Social Research Council into urban economic decline. Hausner (1987) divides the urban hierarchy of the United Kingdom into; 'six large conurbations', 'seventeen free standing cities', and 'smaller towns and rural areas'. The 'large conurbations' he further breaks down into 'inner areas', and 'outer areas', broadly capturing 'inner city

zones' and 'peripheral estates' respectively. The six large conurbations referred to are London, West Midlands, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Tyneside, and Clydeside.

Aggregate figures for the employment performance of cities from each of these categories between 1951 and 1981, are shown in Table 2.1. From this table, it is immediately apparent, that total employment in the inner areas of the six large conurbations has fared worst, falling by nearly 1.2 million (that is around - 14.5%), in the period 1961 - 1981. Further, it is apparent that whilst both the outer areas and free standing cities performed close to the national trends between 1951 and 1971, in the decade 1971 to 1981, they too suffered below average fortunes in terms of changes in overall employment (although at -7.1% and -5.4% respectively, they fared better than the inner areas). Only small towns and rural areas showed any sustained employment growth across the period.

These figures also reveal themselves in the variations in unemployment levels experienced across the country. It is important to look at unemployment figures in this context, given the substantial decentralisation of population away from the major urban centres which has also taken place since 1945. The effects of industrial decline are likely to be less severe if the demand for jobs is itself lowered. From Table 2.2, however, it is apparent that once again inner areas have suffered far

Table 2.1 - Employment change by sector and geographical area in Great Britain 1951-1981

Sector and periods	Inner cities		Outer cities		Free-standing cities		Small towns and rural areas		Great Britain	
	(000s)	(%)	(000s)	(%)	(000s)	(%)	(000s)	(%)	(000s)	(%)
Manufacturing										
1951-61	-143	-8.0	181	45.0	21	2.0	1453	114.0	1374	45.0
1961-71	-428	-26.1	-217	-10.3	-93	-6.2	+489	+12.5	-255	-3.9
1971-81	-447	-36.8	-480	-32.6	-311	-28.6	-717	-17.2	-1929	-24.5
Private services										
1951-61	+192	+11.0	+110	+11.0	+128	+17.0	+514	+16.0	+944	+14.0
1961-71	-297	-15.3	+92	+8.1	-7	-0.8	+535	+14.5	+318	+4.2
1971-81	-105	-6.4	+170	+17.3	+91	+10.9	+805	+24.8	+958	+14.4
Public services										
1951-61	+13	+1.0	+54	+7.0	+38	+6.0	+200	+8.0	+302	+6.0
1961-71	+25	+2.0	+170	+21.6	+110	+17.7	+502	+17.3	+807	+14.5
1971-81	-78	-7.4	+102	+8.8	+53	+6.5	+456	+14.1	+488	+7.7
Total employment ^a										
1951-61	+43	+1.0	+231	+6.0	+140	+6.0	+1060	+10.0	+1490	+7.0
1961-71	-613	-14.8	+19	+0.6	+54	+2.4	+1022	+8.5	+320	+1.3
1971-81	-538	-14.6	-236	-7.1	-150	-5.4	+404	+3.5	-590	-2.7

Hausner 1987 p7

Table 2.2

Trends in unemployment rates broken down by geographical area
1951 - 1981

Type of area	1951	1961	1971	1981
Inner areas of six large conurbations	133	136	144	151
Outer areas of six large conurbations	81	82	88	101
Six large conurbations	103	105	112	122
Seventeen free-standing cities	95	107	112	115
Smaller towns and rural areas	95	93	90	90
Great Britain actual percentage unemployment rates	2.1	2.8	5.2	9.8

Hausner 1987 p8

higher levels of unemployment, standing at 50% higher than the outer areas and 36% higher than the free standing cities in 1981. These latter two groups further display higher unemployment levels than the national average in 1981 and it is once more only the smaller cities and rural areas who registered an above average performance, showing reduced unemployment across the period 1951 to 1981.

In examining these figures, reference has to be made to the way in which decline has resulted in a restructuring of the national economy, away from manufacturing and towards services. Between 1961 and 1981, for instance, the United Kingdom lost nearly 2,200,000 manufacturing jobs (mainly in the larger conurbations) whilst gaining over 2,500,000 service sector jobs (both public and private - calculated from Table 1.1). Across the same period, employment in manufacturing as a percentage of total employment, fell from 52% to 38%, whilst service sector employment rose from 48% to 62% (Hausner 1987 p9,10). Nationally then, the country has undergone a process of postindustrialisation. The ebb of capital away from the industrial cores has resulted in a shift towards services as the main commodities motivating the United Kingdom's economy.

Also, part and parcel of the new service industries, it has to be emphasised, is a growth in part time employment and female labour force participation. This helps explain why the growth in the service industries has failed to offset the decline in manufacturing, despite the apparent

equivalence in numbers. Short (1989) suggests that between 1961 and 1971, the number of women in waged labour increased from 35% to 45% of the total workforce. This has resulted in even greater levels of male unemployment, and high levels of low paid, menial, service jobs for females. With females receiving less pay, it is clear that in terms of job quality, the new era has ushered in labour market characteristics which differ significantly from the previous rounds of investment.

2.4 The state and the local state in the context of decline

Two separate strands of argument have been developed thus far. First, it has been argued that the concept of the state has developed since 1945 within the context of Fordist Keynesian discourse. Bringing capital and labour into a compromise, this discourse was rooted in the belief that strong capitalist growth wedded to state administered welfare programmes was an acceptable way to organise society. The key here however, was that the workers' consumption fund had to be tied to capitalist growth. Accumulation was to be the engine of the compromise. Territorial in form, this type of state regulation was argued to be strongly centralised in the United Kingdom. Suspending the accumulation legitimisation problem was primarily the task of central government. The role the local state in all of this was as the point at which the

consumption fund was discharged.

The second strand of the argument developed above pointed to the fact that the evolution of new strategies for dividing production up spatially in the post war era has resulted in substantial industrial decline in the United Kingdom's older industrial conurbations. In this section, an attempt will be made to bring these two strands together and to set in context therein, the new areas of activity the local state has become involved in in recent times.

It is useful to begin by noting that among regulation school theorists, there has emerged a general consensus that something significant has happened recently (especially since the 1973 oil crisis - see Harvey 1989a) which has called the Fordist Keynesian model into question. In essence, the argument suggests that new conditions have emerged which have intensified the accumulation/legitimation problem noted above. Capitals simply cannot accumulate at a sufficient rate to ensure both 'healthy' levels of profit and an expanded workers' consumption fund. One side of this argument has pointed to the increased demands placed by the population upon the consumption fund available (the health demands of an aged population for instance). Others though have started with the declining fortunes of industry in the older industrial nations and it is towards these that attention now turns.

The first observation to be made in this regard refers to

the altered ability of capitals to contribute to a large workers' consumption fund in times of decline. Firms are struggling to survive against competition from the Newly Industrialising Countries, and to impose heavy tax demands upon them would be to make them less competitive. Growth rates are too slow to expect firms to be able to underwrite a consumption fund of any magnitude. Johnston (1988) provides a second argument which yields one insight into ways in which the new circumstances are being rationalised. He notes that with the globalisation of production (the shift in production (or often parts of the process) away from the developed to the developing world), new discourse has emerged within the older industrial regions which emphasises the lack of ability of the state to force capitals to build up a large workers' consumption fund. Capital can choose to invest wherever it wants and countries must therefore keep themselves competitive. Strong state support for wage rises, union activity, large taxation rates etc, are likely to put off potential investors. It is not so much the *abilities* of capitals to attend to workers' consumption, it is their *need* to which is referred to here. With globalisation, the state loses considerable powers in insisting upon a voice for labour around the means of production.

This new tension between accumulation and the workers' consumption fund has resulted in the evolution of new forms of state intervention regulation theory argues

(Painter 1991), which transcend the logic of the Fordist Keynesian model. Considerable debate would appear to be going at present vis-à-vis attempts to specify precisely what forms these new interventions take. Central to this debate were the policies of the Thatcherite government in the United Kingdom from 1979 to 1990. In trying to set out the context within which the local state has responded to decline, attention will be diverted here to the Thatcherite philosophy of rolling back the frontiers of the state. This has essentially tried to resolve the new tension by reducing the demands the welfare state places upon capitals; and trying to promote the operation of the free market as preferable to state socialism.

Part of the Thatcher project focussed upon expenditure by local government. If the general ideology of rolling back the frontiers of the state was to be successfully mobilised in practice, then reductions in the amount of money local authorities were spending upon service provision would have to be achieved. It is at this juncture that more details on the mechanics of local authority finance have to be outlined.

Duncan and Goodwin (1988) point out that prior to 1975, local government in the United Kingdom had considerable autonomy in raising finance. At that point, two sources of income existed. First, intergovernmental transfers of money (from the centre to the locality) provided the bulk of the local budget. This was added to however, by

revenue raised locally via the rates. Both domestic and commercial rates were charged. The looseness of the criteria used to transfer grants between different tiers of government and the freedom given to local authorities in setting rates, meant that levels of local service provision were controlled essentially at the locality.

With the subsequent breakdown of the Fordist Keynesian system however, and the domination of the Thatcherite philosophy across the period of the 1980s and now 1990s, local autonomy has been severely challenged. In the first instance, the view of the parasitic state, placing heavy burdens on capitals and making them uncompetitive has resulted in attempts to reduce levels of taxation. This combined with a turn by the conservative government towards monetarism as the main line of economic strategy. This shift led to a new emphasis upon the supply of money and the effect public sector borrowing was having on investment. In essence, large public sector borrowing to finance welfare projects was deemed to be putting pressure on interest rates. High interest rates of course means low levels of investment since returns on savings are too great to make speculative investment a serious option. Consequently, central to economic growth was reduced public sector borrowing.

Central government therefore, has been keen to reduce public sector expenditure. However, political reaction in a number of cities opposed this doctrine seeing service

provision as a necessity. The result was an attempt by the centre to impose limits on the local state. Duncan and Goodwin (1988 ch3) present a summary of the increase in central control over local spending which dominated the 1980s. First moves to curb spending came of course in the mid 1970s with the International Monetary Fund's demands upon the then Labour government to cut back upon welfare expenditure. The real cuts however, arrived with the emergence of the Thatcherite administration, and the 'Local Government Planning and Land Act' of 1980. This Act resulted in the introduction of reduced intergovernmental grants for councils deemed to be overspending (as defined by the centre).

By 1982 however, it was becoming apparent that local expenditure was still exceeding centrally defined limits and indeed in some instances, councils appeared to be quite content to lose the central government grant and simply make up the difference by raising local rates. Consequently, in a further act in 1982, the Conservative Party attempted to place a further ceiling on the amount local authorities could raise through the rates. This eventually transferred itself into the rate capping legislation of the mid 1980s which effectively meant that central government could deem unlawful any authority which spent more than was thought legitimate (the so-called high spending Labour councils were the ones targeted in particular).

The net effect of the Conservative Party's strategy has been to exert downward pressure on welfare expenditure in general, and that undertaken by local authorities in particular. This has been a time of fiscal crises in which the post war consensus which promised enhanced living standards for all has been seen to fail. The system has failed to deliver that which it promised. And the demise of the importance of service provision via the local state is part of this. In setting the context within which the local state's response to industrial decline is to be understood then, one has note the demise of the local state's ability to provide services to the local community per se., brought about by its embeddeness within a faltering Fordist Keynesian national state system.

2.5 From *managerialism* to *entrepreneurialism*

In the midst of the declining industrial fortunes already described above, the local state in many of the older industrial regions throughout the 1980s began to become more involved in local economic matters. From being concerned mainly with providing the means of collective consumption (the legitimation of capitalist social relations and the reproduction of labour power), the local state became much more active in formulating local accumulation strategies.

The first thing to observe in this regard is that economic intervention by the local state in areas undergoing decline has and continues to be a somewhat ambiguous

area. Cochrane (1990) notes that prior to 1980, most local authorities did embark upon some initiatives which were explicitly economic in character. In particular, some economic incentives were offered to firms, such as grants and loans for expansion and market research and sites for development and premises, the latter occasionally involving rent free or rate free periods. He points out, however, that such economic activity was largely piecemeal and speculative. The main tasks of the local state were, *a la* Saunders (1981), those related to service provision.

Throughout the 1980s economic policies have certainly become more pronounced. Indeed, a definitive feature of Local Government constitution since 1980 has been the appearance in most areas of some form of Economic Development Committee (Cochrane 1990). Whilst such committees rarely account for more than 1% of total council expenditure, they have Cochrane (1990) argues, discharged over £250 million pounds of public money since 1980.

In order to understand the full role of economic initiatives launched by the local state nevertheless, it has to be realised that the task of Economic Development Committees is in many instances more than simply spending money allocated to them by Policy and Resources Committees. In particular, they are charged with the task of co-ordinating activities which, whilst falling within other

budgets (cultural for instance), have economic implications. It is for this reason that local economic development strategies are ambiguous in character. For often events which seem to be part of conventional council activity, turn out to be part of wider attempts to stimulate economic revival.

That Local authorities are constrained in terms of the amount of money allocated to Economic Development Committees reflects the fact that economic development has traditionally fallen outwith the remit of local governments responsibility. Indeed, even today it continues to be 'ultra vires' in principle. This reflects not only the strength of the local state's traditional role as a service provider but also the fact that central government has been keen, historically, to avoid confrontation with local government over economic strategy.

Having noted then that local economic strategies have become more prominent in recent times despite their ultra vires status, it now remains to be documented precisely what these strategies have involved. It was suggested above that the involvement in the local economy signified a new concern within localities for capitalist accumulation. This has to be qualified immediately with the observation that some of the earliest interventions by local government in the United Kingdom in local economic matters, involved Left Wing councils such as the Greater London Council (now disbanded), West Midlands County Council, and Sheffield, and Derby City

Councils (Boddy 1985, Cochrane 1991). These authorities embarked upon a programme of *municipal socialism* which had at its heart strategies such as sub-contracting to firms in the local area that had good employment practices (in terms of equal pay between the genders, good health and safety records etc), encouraging workers' co-operatives, and providing retraining for local disadvantaged groups. Further, central to their efforts were attempts to halt plans to close down manufacturing plants.

The importance of these local socialist municipalities can be seen when the question of legitimacy is raised. As noted, the central concern herein is with the way in which the local state tries to secure legitimacy for itself in the context of its new role. Whilst showing a concern with accumulation by local firms, these local socialist interventions were able to legitimate themselves by virtue of their concern to 'restructure for labour'. Hudson and Sadler (1988) note that with respect to plant closures, a major fear for local workforces is that with the demise of manufacturing, they will not have the skills to do new jobs which are created. Further, they fear that they may have to move away from the places they grew up in to find work. As such, concentrating upon fighting plant closures and the retraining of local people are clearly ways in which the needs of working class people can be met.

Concern within however, is with more recent local state

interventions which are visibly geared towards 'restructuring for capital' and which have only dubious connection with local working class interests. These types of interventions have most certainly been dominant in the United Kingdom across the 1980s and now 1990s (King 1987, Sadler forthcoming). Harvey (1989b) characterises these type of interventionist strategies as 'urban entrepreneurialism', and suggests that the local state, in taking up more capital friendly initiatives has moved away from its 'managerialist' foundations of the 1950s and 1960s (the hey day of the Fordist Keynesian regime). From providing services and being guided by welfare interventionism, the local state has now emerged as concerned fundamentally with 'accumulation' in the local area. From 'welfare for the community', its ethos now is 'welfare for capital';

'[There has been] a reorientation in attitudes to urban governance ...these last two decades in the advanced capitalist countries..Put simply, the 'managerialist' approach so typical of the 1960s has steadily given way to initiatory and 'entrepreneurial' forms of action in the 1970s and 1980s....urban governance has become increasingly preoccupied with the exploration of new ways in which to foster and encourage local development and employment growth.'

(Harvey 1989b pp 3 and 4)

One concrete expression of these accumulation strategies has been the growth in significance in many areas of formal 'public-private' partnerships (Harding 1990). The function of these partnerships is to encourage the private sector to

play a more active role in the regeneration context. Whilst they vary in terms of size, function and character, an important point to note about all is that representatives from the private sector are given access (however limited) to what might otherwise be thought of as being a public decision making process. The rationale from the point of view of the local state is that these individuals, normally local business elites, will be more adept at understanding precisely what help the local economy needs to stimulate some kind of revival. Harnessing their talents therefore, it is hoped, might allow for more sophisticated measures to be undertaken. Brindley and Stoker (1988), Boyle (1988) and Keating (1988), Parkinson and Evans (1990), Strange (1991), and Lowe (forthcoming) all provide accounts of the operation of such partnerships in the case of Liverpool, Glasgow, London Docklands, Sheffield, and the West-Midlands respectively.

Harvey (1989b) suggests that in seeking economic growth in the local area, public-private partnerships have four strategies open to them. First, they might try and alter the factors of production in the locality such that existing firms become more competitive in export markets, and the locality appears more attractive to mobile capital. Policies to reduce wage levels, to reduce local taxation, to provide venture capital, to ensure public subsidisation of private sector infrastructure, and to assist in technological research (see Wood 1991), are all examples. Secondly,

partnerships might try to attract what Harvey calls 'the consumer dollar'. With the growth of 'lifestyle consumption', localities, through spectacular events and a cultural renaissance, can try to secure income from tourists and local conspicuous consumers. They can try and capture a larger share of the 'regional spend'.

Thirdly, instead of focussing upon production units and the factors affecting production costs, an effort can be made to secure command and control functions in key areas such as finance, government, and information processing (the media included). Finally, partnerships can look to the public sector itself, and the decentralisation strategies of government units as a means of survival. Whether this involves defence jobs, foreign office functions, or 'one off jobs' like census collecting, appealing to central government offers one means of securing employment for the locality.

In this section, two aspects of the 'welfare for capital', accumulation strategies which local states are now embarking upon will be examined in more detail. In broad terms, these relate to Harvey's first two strategies. However, as will become apparent, in some respects Harvey's categories are not mutually exclusive (a fact he himself admits). First, attention will be directed towards the relaxation of planning restrictions which has taken place in some areas and the associated provision of industrial infrastructure by the local state. Secondly,

the turn within most cities to 'place marketing' will be examined. Particular attention will be given to those efforts which have been made to actually 're-aestheticise' localities. With respect to the former, it is useful to focus discussion upon the development of Urban Development Corporations in some cities in England since these Corporations stand as the best examples of the capital led approach in practice.

Urban Development Corporations (UDC's) were first introduced in both the Liverpool and London Docklands in 1981. They represent a concrete manifestation in particular localities of the main thrust of central government's response to the declining fortunes of the older industrial conurbations. Parkinson and Evans (1990 p66) suggest that UDC's represent, 'the jewel in the crown of Mrs. Thatcher's urban strategy'. Indeed, towards the end of the 1980s ten more Development Corporations were designated in Bristol, Tyneside, Wearside, Teeside, Manchester, Cardiff, Sheffield, Leeds, the Black Country, and Trafford (HMSO 1989).

Development Corporations are controlled exclusively by Central Government, who designate, empower and finance them. As an indication, London Docklands Development Corporation, and Merseyside Development Corporation, have had annual budgets of between £60 - £80 million, and £25-£30 million respectively (Parkinson and Evans 1990). An important point about Development Corporations is that

they displace the local state apparatus as the main planning authorities in the areas into which they are introduced. This is why they can be considered here to be local organisations akin to the local state. This is particularly significant given that for the most part, Development Corporations are run by private sector representatives. In this sense, the UDC highlights well the above noted point that in some areas undergoing regeneration local business elites often gain access to what should be a public sector decision making process.

Whilst UDC's all differ to some extent in terms of the precise nature of the policies they pursue, all focus upon the central notion that relaxing planning restrictions and providing extensive financial and infrastructural assistance to the private sector, ought to occupy central stage in any regeneration effort. In the case of the London Docklands for instance, this has involved demolishing older buildings and preparing suitable sites, especially around the waterfront area, and granting major development companies almost unhindered access to local land (Short 1989, Parkinson and Evans 1990). The ability of UDC's to clear land for development purposes is much enhanced by the extensive planning powers they possess. These include the legal right to enforce Compulsory Purchase Orders (Parkinson and Evans 1990).

In practice, the main thrust of Development Corporation

activity has been the capturing of mobile capital. Of great significance in this regard is what Short (1989) refers to as 'Speculative Finance Capital'. By this is meant money held by major banks, building societies and insurance companies. These organisations accrued significant capital reserves throughout the 1980s. One way in which the money was released was into fixed capital investments which, once amortized, could pay more than that which could be achieved through interest rates. Some of the most obvious examples of such investments in older declining regions are waterfront housing developments, shopping centres and office blocks (see Lizieri 1991).

Parkinson and Evans (1990) quote the claims of London Docklands Development Corporation, that between 1981 and the present day, some £440 million of public sector money has succeeded in attracting over £4.4 billion worth of private sector investment. It should be noted however, that 'success' (at least when measured against the criteria of attracting inward investment) has been variable and Corporations such as Liverpool Docklands have achieved substantially poorer leverage ratios. From the point of view of investors, Finance Capital investments are highly speculative in nature and stories of failure are common. Perhaps the best example in recent times is, of course, the Olympia and York development in London Docklands itself.

The second area in which the philosophy of market based regeneration has impinged itself upon the practical activities of local administrations has been that of 'place marketing'. This term has come to denote a fundamental shift in the way in which councils in some areas now see their role. Instead of simply regulating land use in such a way that conflicts between capital and community are minimised, councils now see themselves as having to actively chase prospective investors to put the virtues of the local area across in as conspicuous a way as possible (Ashworth and Voogd 1990, Burgess and Wood 1988). In this sense, localities have become 'commodities' to be promoted and consumed in much the same way as any supermarket good (Kearns and Philo, forthcoming). The locality is the 'good', the market is the private investor or tourist, and the aim is simply to tailor an image for the 'good' which will entice the customer to 'buy'.

Detailed empirical material on the scale and nature of place marketing activity within local government at present is lacking. Perhaps the most extensive study to have been undertaken in the United Kingdom to date is that of Wright (1990). Wright's analysis focuses upon the place marketing activities of some sixty seven local and regional authorities in Scotland, England and Wales. What emerges from this survey is that whilst the degree and character of place marketing varies from place to

place, it nevertheless forms a key element in the economic regeneration activities of a number of councils. In general, Economic Development and Employment Committees within councils are in charge of the promotions undertaken. However, in some cases Marketing Departments, Tourist Boards, and Chief Executive Offices, take the lead. Of those consulted, Wright points out that 50% considered place marketing a vital part of their economic development strategy. Of these authorities, it is significant to note that the majority that thought the most important aspect of marketing was the reversal of negative images of urban decline were such older industrial conurbations as Tyneside, Clydeside, the West Midlands and Sheffield.

Among the most common tactics used were providing free promotional literature and advertising in newspapers, magazines etc (97% of the sample), sending delegates to trade fairs and arranging trips for potential investors (67%), putting on leisure and cultural events in the local area (60%), and advertising through radio and television (13%). It is also worthwhile noting that some 66% of those sampled thought that using a slogan was important in the marketing of cities.

It is significant to note from Wright's analysis that putting on a major leisure or cultural event within a locality is perceived by a number of councils to constitute a good way to market themselves. This observation is bound up with the development of thinking

within councils vis-à-vis the importance of more 'indirect' forms of marketing in urban regeneration programmes. Whilst traditionally stress might have been more exclusively upon discharging business information about particular places, present practice, from the limited evidence currently available, seems to suggest that 'quality of life' variables have grown in importance. The general environmental quality of an area, the cultural and leisure amenities it offers, and other aspects of the 'soft infrastructure' that make up places all appear to have become central to marketing efforts. Re-aestheticising older run down areas through 'spectacular' events has become important.

This is indeed a conclusion a number of authors have asserted is applicable to a great number of West European cities (Ashworth and Voogd 1990, Bianchini 1991) and beyond (Ley and Olds 1988 , Harvey 1989b). Evidently, 1992 has been a year in which Spain has emerged as a country particularly associated with this logic. With the Olympic Games in Barcelona, Expo '92 in Seville, and the European City of Culture event in Madrid, the use of 'spectacle' as an economic boosting device has come particularly to be associated with this country.

The turn towards culture in the regeneration of cities is evidenced not least in the recent burgeoning of the so called 'heritage industry' that a number of authors have noted (Hewison 1987, Kearns and Philo, forthcoming). In

this case, it is not places as such but 'local history' that is appropriated as a marketable good. One can see in these schemes, more concern to entertain and gratify than to present 'realistic' narratives of life as it was lived in the past by locals.

The thesis which supports this 'cultural turn' in the marketing of cities is not as yet well developed. Hughes (1991 p2) describes supportive empirical evidence as 'anecdotal' and it is perhaps wise not to place too much emphasis upon the claims being made in some quarters. Indeed, it is one task of this thesis to examine how officials in Glasgow accounted for the links which they claimed existed between 'culture' and regeneration during 1990.

At a simplistic level, it is clear nevertheless, that by hosting a major event cities hope to put their names on the investment map. Relocation decisions, to an increasing degree favour those cities which seem to offer a good quality of life it is asserted. This is not least, it might be surmised, because of the importance of a good 'atmosphere' in enhancing the extent to which any location secures the status of being a 'prestige site' and thus capable of ensuring the increased asset value of fixed capital that Short (1989) has argued so motivates Speculative Finance Capital. Further, by transforming themselves at an aesthetic level, cities hope to tap into the growing city based tourist market and to attract conferences and

other economically significant events which benefit from a 'cultural feel'. A cultural renaissance is clearly helpful in efforts to capture the 'regional dollar'.

These comments however, are somewhat simplistic given the sophistication of a number of theories which have recently been developed suggesting the importance of paying attention to the role of the formation of a new class strata in society, rooted in the emergent sectors of late twentieth century capitalism (in particular the Financial Services sectors), to culture led regeneration. Featherstone (1988) follows Pierre Bourdieu in referring to this strata as the 'New Petite Bourgeoisie' or the 'New Middle Classes'. This group are characterised, Featherstone argues by the fact that they accrue as much of their identity from what they consume as their place in the occupational hierarchy. Accruing 'cultural capital' it is argued, is just as important as acquiring wealth.

Given this, one might regard places as embarking upon culture led urban regeneration in a bid to tap into the wealth being generated around this new class strata. Firms might be more able to persuade such employees to relocate to the older industrial conurbations if they are perceived to offer the cultural infrastructure which supports the desired lifestyle. Further, housing developments around the ubiquitous waterfront areas of the declining regions have been interpreted in some (and only some) theories of gentrification as efforts by capital to

exploit the cultural tastes of the new middle classes by providing the ultimate 'designer' home (Zukin 1988).

Other more 'lifestyle' oriented theories focus upon the growing green movement and the importance of living in a clean environment. Again, given that industrial landscapes are by their very nature pollutant landscapes, 'greening over' these areas through environmental improvement schemes becomes important if cities wish to attract people to come and live in city centre areas. Again lifestyle marketers recognise this and thus one is constantly reminded in advertisements for newly opened luxury waterfront flats in inner city areas, that a good environmental quality is to be had.

Conjoining these life style theories are some more radical postmodern speculations. Lash (1990 ch 7) suggests that it is a mistake to regard 'spectacular' events as *meaningful* to people or important in the construction of self identity. Instead, one has to examine the 'impact' such events have on the senses. Spectacular events he points out, succeed not because of the narrative they tell, but because of the intensity of *feeling* they generate. Baudrillard (1983) presents a similar argument when he talks of postmodern as a form of 'cultural implosion'. A new aesthetic based culture is emerging argues Baudrillard, in which meaning becomes subordinate to feeling. One further approach to the analysis of the consumption of spectacular events in the urban regeneration context

then, is that which focusses upon the emergence of postmodern consumption based on the gratification of desire (see also Debord's thesis on the Society of the Spectacle, 1973).

Whatever the reason, it nevertheless can legitimately be claimed that culture, leisure and general amenity, have become more important in recent years in the place marketing activities of cities embarking upon regeneration activities. A 'geography of the imagination' has emerged Hughes (1991 p140) claims, in which places are ranked in a hierarchy according to what they offer in quality of life terms. It is not difficult to understand in this regard, the importance being placed by local authorities on the recent batch of quality of life surveys (which compare the rival merits of places) to have emerged; including those undertaken by Rand-McNally, and the Sierra group (Ashworth and Voogd 1990), and more narrowly in the United Kingdom context, work done by the Quality of Life Group at Glasgow University (Rogerson and Findlay 1990).

2.6 Conflict and compromise : the new cultural politics of the local state

It has been argued that the turn by the local state towards local economic development signifies a shift away from its traditional role within the Fordist Keynesian system. From being concerned with the provision of items of collective consumption, the local state now operates

with the additional goal of providing welfare for capital. From legitimating capitalist social relations (*urban managerialism*), they now are active in formulating accumulation strategies for the locality (*urban entrepreneurialism*).

Fundamental to this thesis is the claim that this shift in function within the local state has upset the cultural foundations which have traditionally given it legitimacy. Given this, conflict over the new role is likely. Groups within localities are likely to question the legitimacy of the new set of practices.

Cox and Mair (1988) take up this argument by pointing out that for a whole variety of reasons, 'popular democratic' opposition to market led urban regeneration is an ever present threat to local state institutions. Cox and Mair identify a whole range of conflicts which are likely. First and foremost, they point out that tax incentives to inward investors and local businesses, and public sector investment in creating the 'right business environment', have the net effect of reducing the workers' consumption fund. Indeed, part of the workers' fund gets transformed into a fund for capital accumulation. Conflict is likely to arise then, between those who are reliant upon the workers' consumption fund (perhaps people waiting for their houses to get modernised) and the local state. This conflict is the one of most concern here. Other types identified by Cox and Mair include land use conflicts in circumstances of relaxed planning restrictions, and

conflicts over the type of employment new developments bring.

Cox and Mair's observations are important in so far as they draw attention to the fact that following its change in activity, the local state faces the prospect of suffering a 'legitimation problem' of a different magnitude than hitherto known. As Cox (1989) points out, traditionally conflict within the local state has revolved around which groups within localities are to receive various proportions of the workers' consumption fund. With the transformation of part of the workers' consumption fund into a fund for capital accumulation, the issue now becomes one of the magnitude of the workers' consumption fund overall.

An understanding of the possible legitimation problems faced by the local state in the United Kingdom in the context of this shift in emphasis towards welfare for capital now appears to be entering the literature. Particularly important in this regard have been studies of the response of the community in the area in which the London Docklands Development Corporation operates. Darrell Crilley (1990 p236 - see also Short 1989 and Foster 1991) notes for instance, that among the most recent complaints to have emerged have included;

'the inadequate provision of the means of collective consumption, particularly the lack of rentable or 'affordable' housing; residential displacement to make way for infrastructural provision, eviction of remaining industrial land uses through ruthless use of Compulsory Purchase Orders; the all too small number of jobs for 'local' people; public access to the waterfront; and

underlying all these, the foreclosure of any effective political role in shaping the future of the locality owing to the imposition of a non-elected central government quango.'

Kevin Cox (1989, 1991) has recently launched a research agenda into the ways in which these conflicts have been resolved in the United States context. He argues that the key to the problem is to contain a class based politics of the locality and to unite interests such that the appearance is given that only a territorial based politics matters. It was of course the virtue of the Fordist Keynesian model that it did produce a territorial based politics in which certain interests were assumed as being universal among all residents in a particular place. With the death of this system, the task facing the local state he argues, is to create a new territorial politics based upon new principles.

Key in this regard he suggests, are two sets of tactics the local state is prone to use. Firstly, under a thin appeal to the democratic basis of the change, leaders of the community (in particular labour organisations), are invited to assist in the organisation of economic growth strategies. Community groups for instance, will be invited to contribute but will often have only a minority stake on committees. Having agreed to participate however, they are bound by the 'democratic' decisions of the committee. They become co-conspirators whilst at the same time have their voices neutralised. This exercise in co-option might water down the strength of initiatives but it nevertheless ensures

that the main thrust is retained. Developing formal channels of consultation, with no real power at the end of the day, therefore, is the first tactic used (see Crilley (forthcoming) here for a discussion with relevance to the United Kingdom context).

Second, Cox argues that local states develop territorial discourses which naturalise certain developments as being in the best interests of the community. In some respects this is part of local 'boosterist' rhetoric in which any new development is 'celebrated'. At another level it involves rationalising in public about the need to keep places competitive to sustain any kind of investment in a 'hostile world'.

Harvey's (1989b) account of urban entrepreneurialism also points to the importance of local boosterist strategies in the consolidation of consensus. He suggests that whilst the older functions of the local state tended to be 'dull and bureaucratic', the turn towards entrepreneurialism allows cities to forge new and dynamic identities for themselves. Part of this is the emergence of colourful City Leaders who are portrayed as 'champions' of the city; 'out there' battling for its best interests. He further notes that the use of place marketing campaigns can assist in this and referring to the historical 'bread and circuses' idea argues;

'the orchestrated production of an urban image can, if successful, also help create a sense of social solidarity,

civic pride and loyalty.'

(Harvey 1989b p14)

Cox and Harvey's arguments are interesting in so far as they call attention to the fact that now is a time in which conflict and debate are being negotiated, and new terms of reference established within which the local state acts. At this point however, it is essential to draw upon the above discussion vis-à-vis the different nature of the legitimisation problem faced by the local state in comparison to its national counterpart. It was argued above that a central tenet of Fordist Keynesian discourse was an ideology of growth. By relating the magnitude of the workers' consumption fund to economic growth, all factions of the community in any particular territorial unit became united behind the one aim. State involvement in the economy could be legitimated against this background.

It was also observed however, that in the United Kingdom context, suspending the accumulation/legitimation contradiction has ultimately been the responsibility of central government. Local government has in contrast mainly been concerned with the discharge of the workers' consumption fund. Labour policy and taxation levels have in the main been the responsibility of central government. Given this, local state concern with local accumulation generates a new set of circumstances which cannot seek to draw upon the Fordist Keynesian discourse for its legitimacy.

To expand upon this, it is necessary to examine in more detail the mechanisms through which local government raises revenue. The point can be made most clearly by referring to the new circumstances which have prevailed since 1990 in England and Wales and since 1988 in Scotland. Bailey (1991) provides a detailed description in this context of the new forms of taxation which the 1990 legislation has brought. Under the new system, inter-governmental grant transfers (from central to local government), the distribution of a business rate collected nationally, and the local domestic rates, each constitute one third of local state revenue. The nationalisation of the local business rate and new forms of domestic taxes were the main changes introduced.

Previously, collecting tax from local businesses on the basis of the premises they occupied was the responsibility of local government. And despite the fact that it was relatively insignificant in comparison to central government taxation on private incomes, it did mean that the accumulation/legitimation problem had some type of expression at the level of the local state. With nationalisation however, this power has been removed. Further, redistribution nationally takes place on a per capita bases. Thus local economic performance turns out to be unrelated in the end to the amount of business revenue raised. To add to this, the introduction of the Poll Tax as the new domestic rate (shortly to be abandoned of

course), has resulted itself in a removal of the possibility of retaining some notion of wealth redistribution via local taxation.

The implication of these new arrangements has been that local economic policy cannot seek legitimacy in the ideology that growth is important because the magnitude of the workers' consumption fund is dependent upon it. A better performance by local firms will simply mean a larger national fund. Indeed, rather than improve local economic performance, the only mechanism through which local government can increase the amount it receives from central government is to increase local population. Further, given that the Poll Tax essentially calls upon all residents in localities to pay the same amount, improved economic performance will not in itself enhance the local tax base because local tax is unrelated to income.

Fordist Keynesian discourse then, which rendered economic intervention by the state as legitimate since all sections of the community would benefit from economic growth, cannot be reproduced to secure legitimacy for the local state. Local economic growth in the United Kingdom is at present largely unrelated to the magnitude of local government revenue. Consequently, the magnitude of the consumption fund discharged by the local state is not directly associated with strong local economic growth. The legitimation problem generated by local state intervention in the accumulation process creates a new

sphere within which cultural conflict has to be resolved.

This analysis has to be qualified however, as being relevant only to the United Kingdom case. Following Cox (1991), it was noted above that suspension of the accumulation/legitimation contradiction is in large measure still the responsibility of more local levels of the state in the United States. If this is true, then the question arises as to the extent to which Fordist Keynesian ideology is still drawn upon at the local level in the United States to legitimate local state economic policy.

It is interesting to note in this context, that Cox and Mair (1988) argue that one of the main reasons the local state in the United States has recently become more interested in local economic strategy has been the need to enhance the local tax base. Harvey (1989b p4), heavily influenced by the experience of the city of Baltimore, also suggests that the turn towards urban entrepreneurialism in the United States was in large measure a response to 'the reduction of the flow of federal redistributions and local tax revenues since 1972'. Further, Molotch (1976) in a much earlier statement, seems to situate his entire thesis within Fordist Keynesian language, when he argues that a prime imperative of any city is 'growth'. He thus conceives of the city as a 'growth machine' with the fiscal powers of the state heavily dependent upon the success of the local capitalist sector. There is in otherwords, some evidence in the literature to suggest

that the terms of reference within which local state intervention in the accumulation process in the United States is legitimated, differs from that in the United Kingdom.

2.7 Summary

It has been argued that now is a time when considerable debate seems to be going on in localities over what the proper role of the local state ought to be. This thesis is compiled in the belief that in these debates, one can get vital clues as to the various *interpretive communities* which support the local state. The purpose of this chapter has been to outline the general context within which these debates seem to be taking place. In doing so, a better 'reading' of the debates can take place.

In setting out this context, reference was made first and foremost to the declining fortunes of the local state as a service provider. It was suggested that the demise, nationally, of the post war consensus, rooted in the language of Fordist Keynesianism, and the Conservative Party's response to this demise, had resulted in attempts by the centre to control local government finance. The effect was a constrained ability to raise a significant sized consumption fund. The lack of ability of the local state to fulfil its service functions is part of the general disillusionment with the post war goal of improved living standards alongside strong capitalist

growth. The story of the local state, as such, is part of the bigger issue of fiscal crises. A first contextual element then, is the lack of ability of the local state to provide welfare to the local community even if it wanted to.

The turn by the local state to economic policy, it was then suggested, was in the main a turn away from a 'welfare for the community' *raison d'être*, to one more premised upon 'welfare for capital'. Helping the business community and generating local growth have now become prime objectives of the local state. The implication of this is that part of the workers' consumption fund is being transformed into a fund for capital accumulation. Whether it be in providing infrastructure or investing in spectacular place marketing campaigns, money which might have been spent on the local community more directly, is being diverted to assist the local business community. Aside from the local state having reduced abilities to embark upon welfare campaigns then, recent events point to the fact that what money is available is itself being used for other purposes.

Using the Fordist Keynesian model as one type of state form through which the accumulation/legitimation contradiction built into capitalism is resolved, it was suggested that circumstances present at the local level in the United Kingdom (in contrast to the United States) meant that this model, and the discourse which surrounds it, cannot be

directly applied to legitimate local state intervention in local accumulation processes. Consequently, one should understand the new politics which seems to be being generated within localities as being part of the development of new ways of rationalising about public sector economic intervention. It is with this argument that the case study of Glasgow now begins.

CHAPTER 3 - GLASGOW'S HISTORY : A READING

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is written in the belief that it is impossible to understand the way at least some groups have responded to Glasgow's regeneration efforts, without some reference to the city's history. Central to the cultural turn in social theory is the idea that *readers* of various institutional practices draw upon *culturally available discourses* in the process of interpretation. These resources clearly will have specific time-space characteristics. Consequently, an examination of Glasgow's history can be regarded as vital, in so far as it gives insight into the types of background cultural resources that were available to Glaswegians in the course of the 1980s and particularly during 1990.

The chapter focusses upon four phases of Glasgow's history. Firstly, the economic development of the city between 1700 and the early 1900s, and the associated growth of a Liberal political consciousness will be examined in section 3.2. Secondly, the development of the Labour movement in the city through the events of the Red Clydeside period (1915-1922) will be discussed in section 3.3. The political characteristics of the largely Labour controlled local state from 1933 to the mid 1970s will then be considered (section 3.4). Finally, the pressures

which the Labour Group faced prior to the initiation of the regeneration projects of the 1980s will be considered in sections 3.5 and 3.6.

In line with the particular epistemological commitment which has been used in this project however, it is important to make clear the type of historical writing that is being attempted. If the social constructionist argument is taken seriously, clearly one has to accept that writing about the past represents a construction on the behalf of the author. The historical and social context within which the author operates will inevitably lead to the past being read in a certain way. What appears to be the definitive historical narrative in fact turns out to be 'definitive' only on the basis of the authority the interpretive community in question manages to secure. The type of historical writing being offered here therefore, is one which attempts to explore some of the systems of meaning which have historically been important in Glasgow, but which accepts that the analysis will make sense only to those sharing the same interpretive schemas - mainly here the schemas of authors who have written about Glasgow's history.

3.2 The early economic development of Glasgow and the emergence of a liberal political ideology

During the first eighty years of the eighteenth century, Glasgow established itself as a major trading city. New

trading links were forged with Ireland, Europe, the American colonies of Maryland and the Carolinas, and the Caribbean Islands. The principal commodity involved was Tobbaco. Glasgow imported Tobbaco and produced it for sale on the European market. Whilst the focus was upon Tobbaco, Devine (1977) indicates that merchants also invested in other spheres such as sugar and wine importation, and marine insurance and banking.

Devine's (1975) study of the activities of the so-called Tobbaco Lords, represents one of the most comprehensive to date. The middle classes in the city during this period. formed a highly tight-knit community. Indeed so 'closed' was this community that the more talented and ambitious members of the lower classes found it impossible to gain access to sources of finance that would allow them to participate in the establishment of new trading links. Nevertheless, the investments of the Tobbaco Lords (in developing banking, building warehouses, deepening the Clyde, developing the docks etc) did serve to lay down a commercial infrastructure which benefited the city in succeeding rounds of investment.

Following the American War of Independence in 1776, Glasgow's Tobbaco trade collapsed and the city's merchants were forced to restructure their sphere of activity. Whilst some capital was lost in the turmoil of these years (Devine (1975) pp153-160 charts political conflicts between the British Government and Glasgow

politicians, and emerging representatives in the United States over unpaid debt etc), the Tobacco Lords had accumulated sufficient reserves to reinvest in cotton (although note Devine's (1977 p181) observation that the growth of cotton was related to many other financial sources). Further trading links with South America and the Far East were established (Gibb 1983). Functioning as a trans-shipment point, Glasgow was an excellent location for textiles manufacturing. From the late eighteenth century to the middle of the nineteenth century, cotton weaving dominated industrial life in the city.

Technological changes in the cotton industry however (away from handloom and towards steam driven weaving), resulted in a demand for coal and iron ore. Glasgow's hinterland had large reserves of these resources and soon became exploited. These developments set the context for the next and most important phase of capital accumulation in the city. This phase revolved around Heavy Engineering, in particular Shipbuilding.

By 1900, approximately 65% of the city's employment was concentrated in 39 Shipbuilding Yards. 'Clydebuilt' came to be a famous hallmark and Clydeside emerged in the late nineteenth century as the world's largest producer of iron ships (cornering one fifth of the world market (Keating 1988 p2)). Once more, a number of important entrepreneurs were at the forefront of developments, including such names

as Napier, Tennant, Stephen, Dixon, and Elder. So central to the local economy (and indeed the lives of Glaswegians) did Heavy Engineering become, that Checkland (1981) characterises it through the metaphor of the 'Upas Tree' - towering over everything else and killing everything beneath its roots.

Throughout this period of industrial expansion, Glasgow's population expanded at a quite dramatic pace. Between 1700 and 1800, the population grew from 15,000 to 85,000, and by 1900 the city was home to over one million. To set these figures in context, Gibb (1983) notes that Glasgow had the fastest rate of urbanisation in Europe in the nineteenth century. Growth was attributable to in-migration in the main. Immigrants came from both the Scottish Lowlands and Highlands, and from Ireland.

This industrial and demographic expansion of the city was accompanied by the emergence of pervasive social problems. Chief among these was overcrowded living conditions for the incoming working classes. Overcrowding, combined with little or no sanitary provisions, meant that Health was a major issue in the city. Diseases, such as Typhus and Cholera, were an ever present threat. Damer notes for instance, that in the Cholera epidemics of 1848-49, and 1853-54, some 3,772 and 3,885 people died respectively (Damer 1990a p76). Damer (1990a), argues further, that it was only when disease was spreading among the middle classes in the more affluent West End of the city, that Public Health officials finally intervened around 1850.

Political life in the city in the late nineteenth century was dominated by Liberalism (Smith 1984). Joan Smith (1984) identifies the main tenets of this ideology to have involved; 'a belief in Free Trade, the iniquities of the House of Lords and all other hereditary positions, a loathing of landlordism, and belief in fairness and the rights of small nations and in democracy and in the will of the people.'

(Smith 1984 p34)

In practical terms, perhaps the two most conspicuous features of Glasgow's Liberalism were its strong civic consciousness and municipal projects, and 'rejection' of landlordism.

With respect to the first, Liberalism interacted with the municipalisation of services in a way which was significantly different from the municipal philosophy which dominated in the city across the twentieth century. The public provision of services was seen as an efficient way of satisfying individual needs. Socialist notions of wealth redistribution were subordinate to the idea that municipalisation ought to serve the needs of those who funded projects. Certain private needs could best be satisfied through communal activities.

Smout (1986 p45) and Damer (1990a) emphasise the extent to which Glasgow became a municipal city by tracing out the history of municipal projects. Starting in 1855 with water, the municipalisation of gas, health care, baths and wash houses, laundry facilities, and tramcars, were all

completed by 1900. Indeed, such was the drive towards municipalisation that Damer (1990a p111) makes the claim that; 'put simply, at the turn of the twentieth century, Glasgow was the most municipalised city in the world'. Interestingly, he makes this claim in full cognisance of the achievements of the Chamberlains in Birmingham.

The second dimension of Glasgow's Liberalism relates to the Liberal concept of self determination. In this sense, Liberalism can be seen to be opposed to large scale planning. Decision making is best devolved to the level of the individual. Private ownership is desirable since it facilitates self determination. To the extent that Glasgow was gripped by a Liberal world view, it comes as little surprise that conflict with Landlords emerged subsequently as an area of political controversy.

Interestingly, Damer (1990a) argues that hatred of Landlordism and the Liberal philosophy which underpins it, can be traced to the experiences of the Highland and Irish migrants prior to their arrival in Glasgow. Land clearance projects carried out by Factors in these areas indeed was one of the reasons these migrants left the countryside in the first instance. Reflecting this, Joan Smith (1984) quotes the opinions of one in-migrant of these Factors;

'Honestly, I find it difficult to say what I think of the Dukes. These low, mean, despicable, contemptible wretches, clutching like shylocks their blood money from the land their ancestors stole; these whining,

ungentlemanly, non moral, cowards surfeiting themselves in the plenty they have wrung from the poor; ravishing from aged Labourers their pitifully small pensions; playing on the ignorance of the people to escape taxation; lazy, idle, vicious, greedy, clutching, grasping - what more can I say of them.'

(quoted in Smith 1984 p35)

The importance of the emergence of a Liberal vision of the world in Glasgow lay, Joan Smith (1984) has argued, in its ability to keep in check the Catholic (Irish) and Protestant divide as the city became socialist. This circumstance was not repeated in other cities which had similar influxes of Irish immigrants, such as Liverpool. Taking up the Liverpool/Glasgow comparison, Smith points to the fact that in the latter decades of the nineteenth century, Glasgow had negligent unemployment. Further, Protestants by virtue of their skills alone, occupied different labour markets from Catholics. Competition between the two groups for employment was not therefore, particularly pronounced. This was not the case in Liverpool.

Further, the dispersal of Catholics across the city had prevented the build up of a 'ghetto' mentality. Once more, different circumstances prevailed in Liverpool where concentrated pockets of Irish immigrants could be found. In this environment, Liberalism could grow, and be shared as an ideology by all sections of the Glasgow community Smith argues. The different conditions which prevailed in Liverpool in contrast, bred a Conservative 'serve queen and

country', and Irish Nationalist sectarian division, which Liberalism could not overcome.

The consequence, Smith argues, was that the development of socialism in both places occurred against significantly different contexts. In Glasgow, in the early twentieth century, based around the activities of the Independent Labour Party (ILP) and announced by the events of what is now called the 'Red Clydeside' era, a fairly well developed socialist consciousness emerged. This occurrence constituted an important turning point in the city's political trajectory and one which set the terms of reference within which political debate has taken place since. In Liverpool, in contrast, socialism evolved out of Liberalism more as a 'hit and run' affair, in periods when the sectarian divide allowed. Liverpool consequently, was not controlled by a Labour council until 1955. Attention must now be directed towards this early development of socialism in Glasgow.

3.3 The early development of Municipal Socialism in Glasgow: the events of 'Red Clydeside'

The early development of Municipal Socialism in Glasgow in the period 1915 to 1922 (the 'Red Clydeside' era) was a complicated affair. Many personalities representing many different organisations were active on many different fronts. A plurality of socialist visions appear to have existed at the time, and a review of the literature suggests that a plurality of readings of the era also exist. One of the fundamental issues around which discussion has taken place

has been the extent to which the Labour movement in Glasgow was 'revolutionary' in character. There appears to be no consistent definition of the word 'revolutionary' in these discussions, but certainly the Marxist notion of the socialisation of the means of production appears implicitly.

McLean (1983 p239) has recently argued;

'The Red Clydeside constructed by the excitable minds of John MacLean and Sir Basil Thompson never existed.' (1)

This conclusion was drawn from an examination of the major sources of industrial conflict in Clydeside during the . period. In particular, McLean basis his analysis on the various 'dilution' strikes which occurred in 1915 and 1916, and the so called Forty Hours strike in 1919.

The dilution strikes took place within the context of the national need to increase munitions production for use in the First World War. Both the Government, and employers in the main production centres in the United Kingdom wanted to introduce new technologies which would increase productivity within engineering plants. These technologies were designed to do work which was previously undertaken by skilled craftsmen. Once in place, they could be operated by unskilled workers. In Glasgow (and elsewhere) the craftsmen saw this strategy as an attempt by employers to use the war as an excuse to 'dilute' the skills required to do their jobs. Being regarded as the 'Labour Aristocrats', this was something they feared.

The result was a strong resistance to 'dilution', which was supported by both the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (ASE) nationally, and the Clyde Workers Committee (CWC) (the local representatives of the ASE). In a bid to sell the Government's position, Lloyd George attended a famous mass meeting at St. Andrew's Halls on Christmas day 1915. Lloyd George was shouted down amidst a fury of insults. 'The Forward', the main Left Wing newspaper in the city at the time, reported this instance and was subsequently suppressed amidst great controversy. McLean (1983) demonstrates that these events have to be understood within the context of The Forward's general anti-dilutionist stance.

Despite their opposition, dilution proceeded apace and by March 1916 almost all resistance had been overcome. Punishing those involved, the Government deported some ten members of the Clyde Workers Committee from Glasgow. The Government feared the damage the militancy of the group might do to the war effort and sought to justify the deportations on the basis of sedition.

McLean argues that the dilution strikes, whilst often talked about as being revolutionary in scope, in fact highlighted the extent to which Glasgow's Labour movement was far from 'socialist' in character. Instead of being revolutionaries, McLean suggests that the CWC ought to be regarded as an 'interest group'. The only concern of the

skilled engineers was to maintain their elitist position within the workforce. They opposed dilution, not because it stripped workers of basic rights, but because it represented a source of demotion.

The second event which was important in the instigation of the 'Legend of Red Clydeside' (to use Mclean's phrase), was the 'Forty Hour Strike'. At the end of the war there was a great fear on Clydeside that the reduced need for munitions and the return of soldiers might lead to mass unemployment. This concern was a national one and debate centred upon the need to reduce the length of the working week so that more people overall could participate in waged labour. The question then became the amount by which the average week was to be reduced.

Nationally, the Amalgamated Society of Engineers had negotiated a forty seven hour week (as against the previous fifty four hour week); without reduction in pay. This they advanced as a momentous gain for the Trade Unions. The Left in Glasgow, however, were dissatisfied with this concession.

The ILP, a local committee of the ASE, and the Glasgow Trades Council, all argued for a forty hour week, whilst the CWC called for a thirty hour week. On Monday, January 27th 1919, these institutions called a strike which received massive support (some 70,000 people were estimated to be on strike on Tuesday 28th January).

On Wednesday 29th January, William Gallacher of the British Socialist Party, David Kirkwood of the ILP, and Emanuel ('Manny') Shinwell, Chairman of the Glasgow Trades Council, telegraphed the Prime Minister via Glasgow's Lord Provost and warned that if the strikers demands were not acted upon by Friday 31st, 'unconstitutional tactics' might have to be used.

The Government took this warning seriously and as McLean (1983 p124) shows, feared that if a 'revolutionary' spirit was unleashed in a spate of violence in Glasgow, it might spread all over the country. The result was a massive show of police and military force. When the strikers descended on George Square in the centre of Glasgow on Friday 31st, to hear the response of the Government, the police rioted. In a show of unprovoked violence, they injured thirty four of the strikers. This gave rise to the phrase 'Bloody Friday'. There were many arrests in conjunction with the demonstration. Among those arrested were Kirkwood, Shinwell, and Gallacher.

Once more McLean (1983) argues that common rhetoric (both then and now) and the Liberal Government of the day over-estimated the strength of Glasgow's Labour movement in 1919. The Labour movement was highly fractured regarding views on the optimum length of the working week and had no real direction. It lacked sufficient coherence to translate protest into action. Further, he argues that

'even' the judge at the trial of Shinwell, Kirkwood and Gallacher, recognised that the strike was not revolutionary in scope, and thus passed relatively light sentences.

Whilst Joan Smith (1984 p33) has argued, 'I cannot agree with Iain McLean's recently published thesis that there was no revolutionary potential on the Clyde', most authors appear to accept that the Labour movement in Clydeside during the period 1915-1919, was not in a revolutionary phase. Damer (1990a p117) indeed suggests;

'Neither during the war years nor in 1919 was Glasgow in something called a 'revolutionary situation'. The mass of working people were not Bolsheviks, nor were the vast majority of their leaders... With one or two exceptions, like John MacLean, the Red Clyde leaders were not revolutionaries.'

Damer (1984) indeed criticises McLean for constructing a debate on the era as if the 'revolutionary question' was ever a serious one. Nevertheless, he proceeds to argue that although not revolutionary, Glasgow did witness the rise of a radical working class politics. This politics however, focussed not upon industrial conflict but around consumption issues, in particular housing.

Melling's thesis (1983) is widely accepted as being seminal in this regard. He suggests that a concentration upon production conflicts has acted to undermine the most popular area of class protest in Glasgow during the First World War; that taking to do with housing rents. Glasgow's housing market prior to the war was dominated by the private rented sector. Melling shows that housing construction

did not necessarily derive from the large scale industrial concerns, but involved a plethora of 'petite bourgeoisie' investments.

The overcrowded housing conditions in the city that resulted from rapid urbanisation have already been documented. These conditions were certainly key elements in the emergence of Glasgow's housing politics. Nevertheless, it took one further set of circumstances to inflame class consciousness. In the context of the need by the national Government to increase munitions production for the war effort, Glasgow witnessed a massive inflow of munitions workers in late 1914. Recognising the increased demand for housing this influx generated, private landlords saw an opportunity to increase profits. They raised rents often by as much as 30%. Given the poor quality of the housing in the first instance, and the fact that the landlords were profiteering from a war in which Glasgow men were dying, this action stimulated a massive wave of protest.

Eventually, vocal protest turned into a campaign of non-payment of rents. This campaign was organised first and foremost by Ward Committees. These were a heterogenous bunch of local organisations meeting in public places or occasionally people's houses. They were often controlled by women, an important fact when one considers that the role of women in the emergence of the Labour tradition

is often ignored (Corr 1983). This campaign was met with eviction orders, and when these were resisted, legal moves were taken against eighteen of the key actors. This resulted in further protest marches. As a result of the agitation of the Rent Strikers, an Act was passed by national Government in late December 1915, restricting rents to pre-war levels. This success for the Clydesiders was further heightened when the cases against the eighteen were dropped.

In order to understand the way the Labour Party developed in Glasgow, one has to consider its role in relation to these waves of working class protest. The Independent Labour Party (ILP) was formed in 1894. In the early days, it certainly struggled for its existence against a powerful Liberal presence both locally and nationally and indeed made little progress in terms of parliamentary seats until the Red Clydeside events, and beyond in terms of representation on the Glasgow Corporation. Led by John Wheatley however, the activities of the ILP were fundamentally focussed upon the *living* conditions of the working classes. The ILP focussed upon housing, and made industrial strikes relatively peripheral in terms of local politics.

One cannot claim however, that the Rent Strike of 1915 represented the flourishing of the ILP's mandate into practical action. As Melling (1983 p114) points out;

'There arose a mass resistance to rent rises and landlordism which possessed its own dynamic and significance autonomous from the socialist critique of capitalism, or even the Labour campaign for municipal housing'

To understand the Rent Strike, one has to situate it within the Liberal 'commonsense' that dominated the city in the preceeding years (Smith 1984). Aspects of this Liberal world view have already been discussed. In particular, one can see the significance of the hatred of Landlordism that Liberalism engendered. Indeed, Damer (1984) notes that the systems of justice held by the Highland and Irish immigrants were of central importance in the Rent Strikes.

Nevertheless, the tension created by the Rent Strike did provide the launch pad for the ILP, who re-moulded the Liberal consciousness that had stimulated the strike in the first instance, into a socialist one. Melling (1983) documents the highly effective way in which ILP members got themselves elected onto Ward Committees in charge of the strike, and provided alternative accounts of events as they unfolded through a more socialist lense. The consequence of this intervention was that the ILP gained in importance locally, at least in parliamentary terms. They succeeded in recasting the Liberal idea of fairness into a socialist one which perceived that the only way Glasgow could solve its housing problems was for the state to embark upon large scale housing construction.

In the 1922 General Election, the ILP challenged the local Liberal Party and managed to gain ten of Glasgow's fifteen Parliamentary seats (in comparison to the one they achieved in 1919). Among the elected MP's were Red Clydesiders, David Kirkwood, John Wheatley, John Muir and Tom Johnston.

As a result of the ILP's success in stimulating demands for public housing, John Wheatley headed a national Housing Enquiry and succeeded in passing through the Housing Bill of 1924, permitting local government to use public funds to construct housing. Glasgow used this legislation extensively. Given the city's strong municipal traditions, this municipalisation of housing can be regarded as more of an evolution of local government rather than a revolution. Once more, the preceding Liberal world view provided an apparatus which socialism could develop as opposed to simply having to overcome (Smith 1984).

One might interpret the Red Clydeside period then as a period of change in the political consciousness of Glaswegians; away from Liberalism and towards socialism. Whilst it is debateable the extent to which conflicts around the means of production were symptomatic of socialist aspirations, certainly working class groups across the city were challenging the hegemony of private landlords and through the activities of the ILP, formulating an alternative vision of how items of consumption ought to be provided. The construction of public sector

housing was placed firmly on the agenda. Having outlined the early phases in the development of socialism in Glasgow, attention must now be turned to the way local politics have evolved in the city since Red Clydeside.

3.4 Beyond Red Clydeside : The Labour Party in Glasgow from 1919 to the mid 1970s.

In this section, attention is directed to the fortunes of the local Labour Party from the period of Red Clydeside to the mid 1970s. Discussion will be divided into two parts. First, Labour's success at the polls will be considered. This will be followed by a discussion of the policy initiatives the party pursued across the period.

Despite the events of Red Clydeside and the ILP's success in the 1922 General Election, Labour did not manage to gain control of the Glasgow Corporation until 1933 (2). Various reasons for this can be cited. Perhaps the dominant factor was the inability of the ILP to gain full control of the Irish vote (McLean 1983).

Tension between the ILP and the Irish community had existed in Glasgow as a consequence of Rome's early rejection of Socialism in the *Rerum Novarum*. This tension was somewhat reduced as a consequence of the activities of local ILP leader John Wheatley. Wheatley, a Catholic, had publicly debated the issue of Catholic support for Socialism with local priests and according to Damer (1990a p119) had 'trounced'

them. Further, it will be recalled that Smith (1984) has argued that as a consequence of the strong Liberal tradition in Glasgow, the Irish-Protestant divide was weaker in Glasgow in comparison to such places as Liverpool. The Irish vote nevertheless, remained a problematic one for the ILP. This was not least as a result of Labour's ambiguous stance towards prohibition, a position which sat uneasy with Irish publicans.

Between 1933 and the late 1950s, the Labour Party (into which the ILP was by now subsumed) struggled to secure its position on the council (see Keating 1988 p14); although it managed to hold the balance of power in the main. Beyond 1960, Table 3.1, showing a selection of municipal election results, allows a picture to be built up of the fortunes of the local Labour Group since 1962. Two major points should be noted from this table. First, it is evident that the Labour Party have dominated local politics to an increasing degree over the last thirty years. Local government reorganisation in 1974 clearly did not interfere with Labour's 1973 majority (they held approximately 75% of the council across the transition). Since then, Labour representation on the GDC has increased from 81% in 1980 to its peak of 90% in 1988. In the last three decades therefore, Labour has virtually had a monopoly of power over municipal Glasgow (Keating 1988).

Table 3.1 - Municipal Election results in Glasgow
1962-1988 (3)

Date	Total seats	No. and (%) of Councillors elected				
		Labour	Conservative	Progressives	SNP	Others
1962	111	69 (63%)	-	42 (37%)	-	-
1966	111	60 (54%)	-	50 (45%)	-	1 (1%)
1969	111	38 (35%)	12 (10%)	46 (42%)	15 (13%)	-
1973	111	83 (75%)	25 (22%)	3 (3%)	-	-
1974	72	55 (76%)	17 (24%)	-	-	-
1976	72	54 (75%)	17 (24%)	-	1 (1%)	-
1977	72	30 (42%)	25 (35%)	-	16 (22%)	1 (1%)
1980	72	58 (81%)	11 (15%)	-	-	3 (4%)
1984	66	59 (89%)	5 (8%)	-	-	2 (3%)
1988	66	60 (90%)	4 (7%)	-	-	2 (3%)

Sources : All Glasgow Herald anonymous 2/5/62 p10,
anonymous 4/5/66 p8, Thomson 7/5/69 p8,
Thomson 2/5/73 p2, Clarke 9/5/74 p8,
Thomson 4/5/77 p1, Clark and MacCalman
6/5/88 p1

On a somewhat contradictory note, the second thing to notice from Table 3.1 is the dramatic collapse of the Labour vote in the 1977 elections. Indeed, from having 75% of the vote in 1976, the Labour Party's share slumped to only 42% in 1977. Further, it was not until 1980 that the Labour Party returned to power in the city. The share of the vote received in 1977 failed to give the Labour Party the necessary majority and under pressure they conceded council leadership to the Conservative Party. It is clear from the figures that something happened to boost the fortunes of the SNP during 1977. Indeed this was a national phenomena, associated with a general decline in the fortunes of Labour. More important from the point of

view of this thesis however, is the fact that the local Labour Group interpreted the result as a warning and set out to update the Party's policies. Part of this involved the regeneration projects which were to dominate the 1980s. As a consequence, 1977 emerges as a watershed year. This is an argument which will be developed below in the conclusion to the chapter.

The Labour Party's grip on Glasgow since 1933 has had some important material implications for the local working classes. Throughout the period, it would be fair to say that Housing has been the main issue in the city. And in line with its commitment to the 'Housing Issue', the Labour Group since the era of Red Clydeside, has embarked upon a massive programme of public sector house construction in a bid to provide decent municipal houses for the residents of the city. This of course was initiated prior to 1933, when the Progressive Party was in power, nevertheless the Labour Group emerged as the key actor beyond 1933.

Whilst some of the worst health problems had been eradicated by the early 1900s, there still remained severe overcrowding in Glasgow's working class core. In 1917 for instance, 10.9% of Glasgow houses had four persons per room, 27.9% had more than three per room, and 55.7% had more than two. The equivalent figures for England are 0.8%, 1.5%, and 9.4% respectively (Pacione

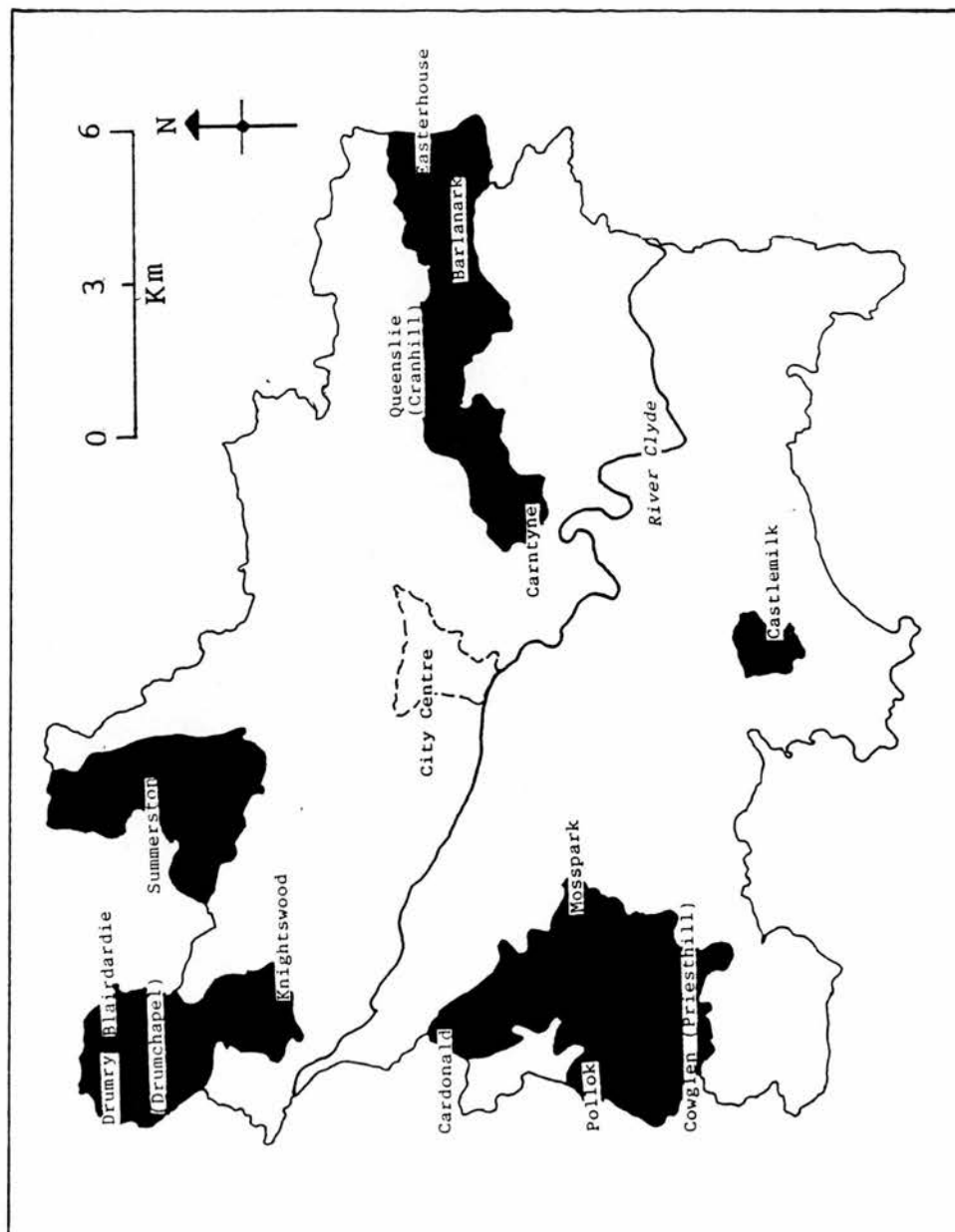
1979). By 1914, over 700,000 people resided within three square miles of Glasgow Cross (Pacione 1979).

In the inter-war years, the Labour Party constructed a number of good quality low density council estates such as Knightswood, Cardonald, Carntyne, and Mosspark, and some lesser quality high density estates such as Possil and Blackhill (Map 3.1). In total, some 73,630 houses were constructed during the period (Pacione 1979).

Following the Second World War, problems of overcrowding remained severe and it was estimated that some 80,000 to 90,000 families still required rehousing (Pacione 1979). At this point the city was faced with two options. The Clyde Valley Plan of 1946 suggested that a policy of 'Overspill' should be adopted, whereby a 'Green Belt' should be envisaged around Glasgow and population and industry encouraged to displace out to existing towns beyond this belt (Abercrombie and Matthew 1949).

This plan was favoured by the Scottish Office. It was however, vigorously opposed by the Glasgow Corporation who instead adopted the so-called Bruce Plan. This plan suggested that expansion should keep within the boundaries of the city and involve the construction of more peripheral schemes. The Corporation argued for the Bruce Plan on the basis of keeping the population of Glasgow large; to ensure its status as a major conurbation and to avoid the implications of a weakened tax base.

MAP 3.1 PERIPHERAL HOUSING ESTATES IN GLASGOW *



* Boundaries are defined by Glasgow District Council Wards. Housing estates may stretch beyond political boundaries, nevertheless wards represent the core area of estates.

As a result, further peripheral council housing estates were constructed at the city's fringes. These included Drumchapel, Easterhouse, Castlemilk, Pollok and Priesthill (Map 3.1). When completed, they absorbed just under 80,000 people from the overcrowded core. Throughout the 1950s however, it was clear that conditions in the centre were still getting worse and that the construction of new houses would have to take place at a much faster rate. The result was three further policy initiatives which ran in parallel with the construction of peripheral estates.

First, the Corporation conceded to the Scottish Office over the recommendations of the Clyde Valley Plan and agreed to a policy of overspill. Initially, East Kilbride and Cumbernauld were the recognised reception areas. Later however, Glenrothes, Livingston and Irvine were added. These were to be called 'New Towns'. During the 1960s and early 1970s, Glasgow entered into deals with all these towns, providing reimbursement for the costs which the New Town had to endure. Initial estimates of the need for over 200,000 relocations were reappraised throughout the period, and in the late 1960s, it was estimated that between 400,000 and 500,000 people would have to leave the city (Pacione 1979, Gibb 1983).

The second policy area was that of 'Slum Clearance'. This was based upon the notion of the Comprehensive Development Area (CDA). In 1957, some 29 CDAs were

provisionally designated in the central area. These varied in size; ranging from populations of 4,000 to 40,000. Comprehensive Development Areas were defined as parts of the city which were in particular need of complete destruction and redevelopment. CDAs were to be ranked according to the urgency with which clearance was required. Initial projections suggested that all areas could be redeveloped within twenty years, that is by 1981. The scheme was, however, abandoned in 1975, with only fourteen areas fully designated and cleared. The third policy area utilised was that of the construction of high rise blocks within the city's perimeters. The thinking behind this initiative was that high rise blocks could provide high density housing without consuming vast amounts of scarce ground space (Checkland 1981 p71).

Throughout the period of 1933 to the early 1970s then, at the hands of the local Labour Party, Glasgow's municipal authorities became preoccupied with solving the problems of overcrowding and poor housing. At the end of the period, some 160,000 new council houses had been constructed, 200,000 people had been displaced to New Towns, 168 high rise blocks had been erected, and some 95,000 houses in the inner city had been demolished (Gibb 1983). The ethos of welfare intervention and improving the quality of life of working class people had resulted in a substantial reorganisation of the city.

How can one characterise the Labour movement in Glasgow

during this period of house building? Most commentators seem to agree that whilst large scale provision of housing did indicate a Local Authority intent on improving the living environment of the working classes, Glasgow was far from being the extreme Left Wing city that the legacy of the Red Clydeside era would have led one to suspect. Indeed, Glasgow's Labour Party emerged as somewhat *apolitical*.

Keating (1988 p13) argues;

'Glasgow Labour was neither on the radical Left nor on the revisionist right of Labour politics in the 1950s and 1960s. Indeed....most councillors in these years came into political activity and stood for office as a result of local group influences and contacts rather than because of any ideological motivation. Such an 'apolitical' group could contribute very little to the battles, policies and programmes within the Labour Party during this period.'

Savage (1989) develops this argument in an interesting thesis titled, 'Whatever happened to red Clydeside?'.

Savage suggests that local political groups can develop at least two types of relationship with the local state. Firstly they can establish themselves independent of the local state, thereby regarding it as a tool to be used to further larger political ends. Alternatively, they can regard the local state as an important institution in its own right, and seek to relate to it within its own terms of reference (or at least the terms of reference set down by Central Government). This latter type of relationship is the classic case of the more passive *managerialist* form of local government which Harvey (1989b) talks about.

Savage (1989) argues that Glasgow's Labour movement developed within the local state, rather than as an interest group outside it. Consequently, it did not in itself have an agenda; its agenda was set by Central Government and the Progressive Party's early housing initiatives. Consequently, its politics were not particularly radical in scope, taking place within the strictures of local government.

Part of the reason why no coherent alternative Left wing voice *outwith* local government existed, Savage argues, was the 'individuating' effects of the Labour Party's policies themselves. The housing policies were serving to break up any cohesiveness which might have existed amongst working class groups in the old tenement neighbourhoods. Firstly, as will be noted shortly, many of the peripheral schemes were constructed without the provision of communal meeting points. Reproducing any kind of community spirit was difficult. Secondly, the working classes vacating the inner city areas were themselves segregated into whether they were suitable for 'Ordinary' (the best), 'Intermediate', or 'Rehousing' (the worst) housing types.

We might conclude therefore, that the Labour Party following the Red Clydeside era, was certainly Left Wing in so far as its *raison d'être* was the large scale provision of items

of collective consumption. Nevertheless, its character was rather austere; *managerialist* in nature. The party was located firmly *within* the local state and did not develop a radical *relationship* to local government. If Savage's (1989) thesis is to be accepted, the lack of development of an alternative voice for the Left outwith the local state can be seen to be partly attributable to the 'individuating' effects of the Labour Party's policies themselves.

3.5 The downturn in fortunes (a) - problems with the housing interventions

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, a number of severe problems emerged in Glasgow which set the context for the political efforts which were undertaken during the 1980s and now the 1990s. Some of these problems concerned the housing strategies the Labour group had adopted. These will be discussed here around the four interventions which were reported upon above; namely the construction of peripheral estates, the instigation of an Overspill Policy, the identification of Comprehensive Development Areas to stimulate slum clearance, and the adoption of a High Rise solution.

Perhaps the most important problems to emerge were those in the peripheral housing schemes (Keating 1988). As noted above, it had proven difficult for planners to

reproduce the dense social networks which had built up in the old inner core and complaints of a lack of community spirit and alienation were common. A contributory factor here was that many of the estates had been constructed without amenities such as doctors, libraries, swimming baths, shops etc. This was the result of the urgency with which housing projects had to be completed and the desire on the behalf of the council to keep rents low. The problem was particularly associated with estates such as Possil, Blackhill, Pollok, Easterhouse, Drumchapel and Castlemilk (Map 3.1).

Feelings of alienation were inflamed by the fact that people in the estates found great difficulty in finding employment in the city centre. A number of factors had an influence in this context. Many of the schemes became 'dumping grounds' for difficult families and began to attract a bad reputation. This increased the difficulties people in these areas had in getting employment as employers often discriminated on the basis of home location. Socially, the reputation of some estates continues to play a role in events such as the meeting of a partner.

Further, many of the estates were over four miles from the city centre and were not serviced by a proper transport network. With low levels of car ownership, getting back and forth to the city centre was expensive and time consuming. Thus, besides social alienation, there was

direct physical alienation.

Therefore, far from being perceived as a source of increased quality of life by residents, the peripheral estates became a focus of resentment towards the large scale interventionist policies practised by the Labour Group. As a measure of the dissatisfaction felt, Table 3.2 documents the percentage of people wanting a transfer out of the peripheral areas in comparison to other areas in 1977. It is clear from these figures that substantially more people wanted a move out of such estates as Castlemilk, Drumchapel, Easterhouse and Pollok, than was the case in any other council housing area of the city.

Table 3.2 - Requests for transfers out of council housing areas

Area	Transfer requests as a percentage of total households
Anniesland	4.84
Bardowie Street	14.87
Castlemilk	28.28
City Centre	10.51
Drumchapel	32.50
Easterhouse	31.45
Gallowgate	12.61
Mid-East	12.83
North-East	19.07
Pollok	30.54
South	6.94
Southwest	4.63

(Source : Pacione 1979 p403)

Attention now has to be turned to the second policy solution attempted, that of Overspill. In setting the context, it is necessary to note that natural processes of suburbanisation were resulting in population losses for the city in any case about this period. Further, suburbanisation was highly selective, involving mainly younger, well educated people of relatively high socio-economic status. The effects of this were to leave high concentrations of 'dependents' (the very young, unemployed, OAPs, single parent families etc) in the city, and a much eroded tax base.

Set against this background, the strategy of displacing people to New Towns can be seen to have exacerbated those problems suburbanisation was creating. This was particularly the case since in the early phases of Overspill, only people who had a job (ie. the young mobile aspiring middle classes) were allowed to move. New Towns were obviously keen to avoid absorbing sections of the community who would place large burdens on local resources.

The third policy area, that of Comprehensive Development Areas, also proved problematic. As stated above, these areas were designated in a bid to speed up the rate of slum clearance in the city centre. Clearance was undertaken on the basis of a ranking system in which priority was given to areas in particular need. Two problems in particular resulted from the CDA policy.

First, because redevelopment in CDAs was expected to take over twenty years to be completed, there were long time gaps between designation and clearance. This was especially true in the case of the lower ranked areas. The effect of this was that people living in areas which were to be cleared in the 'near' future, simply let their properties run into ruin. There was no point in investing in house improvements when they were to be cleared. With the time lag however, this often resulted in worsening conditions over periods of years in some instances. Consequently, the effect of the CDA policy was to stimulate rather than retard the rate at which tenements in the city centre fell into disrepair. Secondly, areas were often cleared without any plans for subsequent redevelopment. The effect was that large open expanses of waste ground became a common feature of Glasgow's landscape.

The final policy area was that of High Rise, Tower Blocks. One must be careful of downplaying the popularity of High Rise blocks since research evidence points to contradictory conclusions. It is nevertheless useful, even if somewhat superficial and one sided, to reproduce Checkland's (1981 p75) observations;

'with use, many disadvantages began to appear. Older people tended to be isolated, and families with young children found access to the world outside the flat difficult. You shut your door and you were on your own. There was too the problem of maintenance, especially of the indispensable lifts, of the stairs, of the communal areas and of the environs of the flats which could so easily deteriorate. Moreover, the money cost of such

flats, in spite of expectations proved very high....The policy of building high flats therefore, like that of overspill, reached the limits imposed by experience.'

There existed substantial concern with the council's housing interventions therefore. Lying at the root of all of the problems noted, is the fact that the council had taken decisions which were having enormous consequences for Glaswegians, without proper consultation. The council assumed that they knew what was 'best' for the people. Power had become over-centralised.

Damer (1990a p192) argues that the *Murphioso* 'highjacked' the council during this era. By *Murphioso* is meant council leaders of Irish extraction who were more renowned for their aspirations to be in power than to serve the people. The reign of former Lord Provost Paddy Dollan is cited by Damer as an example of the *Murphioso* in practice. He interprets the development of Labour Party policy throughout the 1980s as in part an effort to overcome the *Murphioso* tradition. Despite its somewhat 'journalistic' development in Damer, this idea would seem to be worthy of future research.

3.6 The downturn in fortunes (b) - economic decline

Alongside those problems associated with the council's housing policies, there emerged in the 1970s, a growing realisation that Glasgow was losing its industrial base. Economic downturn, which was a feature of all the large

industrial conurbations in the United Kingdom, was proving to be severe. In this section, an effort will be made to summarise the main features of the economic problems Glasgow has suffered from.

Table 3.3 shows total employment statistics for Glasgow for the period 1952-1981, and more specific manufacturing and service statistics for the period 1961-1981. The data refer to Glasgow's 'inner conurbation' which is more or less the political boundary of Glasgow District Council (Map 3.1). From this table, three clear trends can be observed. First, total employment has declined sharply. Second, employment in the manufacturing sector has declined consistently and severely, whilst services have remained fairly stable across the period. Third, as a consequence, services have grown in importance in relation to the wider economy. Each will now be looked at in more detail.

Table 3.3 - Employment statistics in Glasgow 1952 - 1981

Year	Total	Manufact.	% of total	Services	% of total
1952	563 500	-		-	
1961	540 706	226 812	49.1	259 226	47.9
1971	462 545	151 257	32.7	271 045	58.6
1981	398 685	97 872	24.5	263 128	66.0
change 61-71	-142 021	-128 940		3 902	

(Source : Lever and Mather 1986 p4)

Between 1952 and 1981, Glasgow lost 164,815 jobs in total.

This decline amounted to almost 30% of the 1952 base figure. Decline was at its worst in the period 1961 to 1971 when some 78,161 jobs were lost (compared with the 1952 to 1961 figure of 22,794 and 1971 to 1981 figure of 63,860. By the end of the 1970s, unemployment in Glasgow had reached its highest ever in the post-war era, standing in 1982 at 76,413, (20% of the economically active population - McGregor and Mather 1986).

To place this decline in context, Table 3.4 shows the percentage change in employment in Glasgow's inner conurbation in comparison to the Scottish and Great British equivalents, between 1972 and 1983. It is clear that employment losses in Glasgow were much more severe in the period 1972 to 1983, and in particular in the periods 1975 to 1978 and 1978 to 1981, than was the case in Scotland and in Great Britain generally. A difference of some 4.8% between Glasgow and Great Britain's percentage employment change is observed between 1975 and 1978, for example, and 6.4% between Glasgow and Scotland in the period 1978 to 1981.

The second trend noted above was that the city's manufacturing base declined severely and consistently across the period 1961 to 1981. In this period, a total of 128,940 manufacturing jobs were lost (57% of the 1961 total). Services in contrast, actually increased between

Table 3.4 Percentage employment change in Glasgow's inner conurbation compared to GB and Scotland 1972-1983

Period	GB	Scotland	Inner conurbation
1972 - 1975	+ 2.6%	+ 4.4%	- 0.6%
1975 - 1978	+ 0.3%	- 0.4%	- 4.4%
1978 - 1981	- 4.0%	- 3.1%	- 9.5%
1981 - 1983	- 3.0%	- 3.2%	- 3.2%

(Source : Glasgow District Council 1985 p32)

1961 to 1971, and despite declining between 1971 and 1981, across the period 1961 to 1981, showed an overall increase of 3,902 (1.5% of the 1961 total). Major losses in the manufacturing sector took place in Mechanical Engineering (-16,712), Shipbuilding (-14,992), Metal Manufacturing (-14,373), and Vehicles (-8,434) (all figures refer to the 1961-1971 period - see Lever and Mather 1986). The industrial base which had brought Glasgow the status 'Second City of the Empire', was proving to be its downfall.

The third observation derives from the second. Given the better performance by services across the period, Glasgow switched from being predominantly manufacturing based to being much more reliant upon services. From employing only 47.9% of the total workforce in 1961, services accounted for 66% of jobs in the city in 1981. In contrast, the manufacturing sector, having an albeit narrow majority of 49.1% in 1961, accounted for only 29.5% of the economically active population in 1981. From being a

predominantly industrial city in 1961, Glasgow asserted itself as a predominantly post-industrial city in 1981 (Lever and Mather 1986). Chief increases in services in the period 1971 to 1981 occurred in Insurance, Banking and Finance, Professional Services, and Public Administration. Against the background of decline, these sectors managed to provide over 10,000 new jobs.

3.7 Summary

The purpose of this chapter has been to provide an outline of the historical context within which one might interpret reaction in Glasgow to Glasgow District Council's recent regeneration projects. Four points are perhaps worth emphasising. Firstly, following a period of great economic expansion and the emergence of a Liberal commonsense, Glasgow developed a somewhat radical working class politics in the period 1915-1919. This era, titled Red Clydeside, signified the emergence of a strong working class opposition to poor housing conditions and high rents and prompted national housing legislation allowing the construction of municipal housing. Although a relatively brief period in the city's history, the era has left a profound imprint in the Glasgow consciousness. It survives in oral histories and some of its more important characters (such as John MacLean) retain 'heroic' status.

Secondly, despite the events of Red Clydeside, the Labour Party never gained power until 1933. It has however,

dominated the council, to an increasing extent, ever since. The alleviation of overcrowded/slum living conditions in the city centre and the construction of municipal housing, although begun under the reign of the Progressives, formed the main focus of attention. The Party was not particularly political during this era; managing the discharge of the consumption fund *within* the local state, rather than using the local state apparatus to further a more politicised agenda. The Left in Glasgow was dominated by activity *within* the local state and thus was if anything conservative.

Third, directly as a consequence of the failure of housing initiatives however, resentment grew in the city towards the local Labour Group. The peripheral schemes have proven, perhaps above all else, the symbol of the failure of the large scale interventions undertaken. Such schemes as Possil, Blackhill, Priesthill, Castlemilk, Easterhouse, Drumchapel, and Cranhill continue to suffer from the problems these initiatives left behind. Central to the problems witnessed was the over-centralised way in which housing decisions were being made. Damer (1990a) characterises this through reference to the *notion* of the *Murphioso* tradition - Irish leaders with burning political ambition. Whilst this idea is at present little more than speculation it is certainly worthy of further research.

Finally, it is also apparent that Glasgow's industrial

fortunes have fluctuated across the period. From Tobbaco, through Cotton and more recently to Heavy Engineering and Shipbuilding, Glasgow has seen the rise and fall of a number of industrial activities. The decline of Heavy Engineering and Shipbuilding and the first glimpses of a post-industrial future, sets the economic context within which the recent regeneration projects have been launched.

As noted above, the critical turning point for the local Labour Party came with the 1977 election defeat. Labour lost some 25 wards and was forced to concede power to the Conservative Party. Believing that the electorate had become disillusioned with the Party, this defeat prompted much introspection within the Labour Group. By 1978, new policy documents were being produced. At that point, the Party decided that the two most important problems which had to be addressed were those of the 'centralist' (Murphioso?) legacy and rising unemployment. The solutions to these two problems it was suggested, were the devolution of decision making power down to the community, and public encouragement of the private sector (interview with Miss Mearns of Glasgow District Council, October 1st 1990 - see Appendix 1).

This policy change on the behalf of the council was documented by Labour Group leader Jean McFadden, in two benchmark talks delivered at the First Conference of Project Turin International held in Glasgow in October 1981. This conference was organised by Glasgow District

Council and had as its general theme 'Approaches to Urban Regeneration'. McFadden outlined the council's position thus;

'[change] was precipitated by the 1977 local elections which resulted in a 'hung' council with the Labour Party losing a large number of seats. The Labour Party was forced into opposition losing a large number of its senior members. The rump for those of us left, forced a reappraisal of our policies : Increasingly we became aware (through local government defeat I am ashamed to say), of the real sense of alienation, frustration, disaffection, and cynicism throughout so many communities in Glasgow. While in opposition, the Labour Party started to produce documents on what we thought to be the most important issues with which we had to contend.'

(McFadden 1982b p103)

'The two major themes of this conference, 'partnership initiatives with the private sector', and 'decentralisation and participation in Urban Government', collectively represent the most challenging and potentially most effective means at our disposal, to combat the seemingly irreversible process of urban decline.'

(McFadden 1982a p6-7)

It is towards an investigation of the 'partnership initiatives with the private sector' aspect of the 'new' Labour Party that attention now turns.

NOTES

1. John MacLean was one of the leading actors in the early development of the Labour movement in Glasgow. A Marxist in inspiration, MacLean acted independent of the ILP - agitating for revolution rather than reformation. Although his influence did not translate itself into practical change (he certainly had less effect than Wheatley for instance) he emerged as one of the most popular of all the Red Clydesiders. Nan Milton (1973 p30-31) provides photographs of MacLeans funeral in 1923

for instance, at which over 5,000 Glaswegians turned up. He remains something of a 'hero' in surviving oral histories of the period.

2. It should be noted that the local council prior to local government re-organisation was referred to as the 'Glasgow Corporation'. Since 1974, of course, it has been termed Glasgow District Council.

3. The Conservative Party began to contest local elections only in the late 1960s. Most of the members of the Progressive Party joined the Conservative Party at this time (Keating 1988 p15).

CHAPTER 4 - GLASGOW'S REGENERATION PROGRAMME IN THE 1980s

4.1 Introduction

In regaining control of the council in 1980, the *new* Labour Party began to look at new ways in which to intervene in the local economy. At a meeting on October 23rd 1980, the Policy and Resources Committee of Glasgow District Council (those responsible for the council's finances), agreed that 'a key objective of the [new] strategy must be to increase jobs in the city' (Glasgow District Council 1981 p1). As a consequence, a Policy Conference on Economic Regeneration was held in November 1981 and from this emerged a special sub committee for Economic Development and Employment (EDEC). This committee was charged with the responsibility of 'implementing a strategy for contributing to the solution of the economic problems of the city' (Glasgow District Council 1981 p1).

In September 1981, this committee published their first Economic Development Plan (Glasgow District Council 1981). This provided a review of the economic performance of Glasgow over the preceeding decade, an outline of the key policies the council was to pursue, and the projected costs involved. Since this plan, seven additional updated plans have been published by the council at regular intervals. These provide up to date information about Glasgow's

economy, review the success of projects implemented to date, affirm the council's key economic objectives and document any new objectives which arise. They also provide information on the financial aspects of projects.

The principal aim of this chapter is to summarise the main features of these plans and the council's overall economic strategy. Discussion will begin with a general examination of the role of the Economic Development and Employment Committee and the main objectives embodied in the plans (section 4.2). This will be followed by more detailed consideration of the importance of image building strategies (section 4.3) and the 'Cultural Industries' (section 4.4), in Glasgow's regeneration programme.

Alongside the council, a group called Glasgow Action emerged in the mid 1980s as important in formulating and implementing regeneration initiatives. Despite being formed at the request of the Scottish Development Agency, Glasgow Action was comprised of a number of leading private sector figures in the city. As such, it represented a new level of involvement by the private sector in civic decision making. Being part of the general consensus between the public and private sectors in Glasgow during the 1980s, it is useful to look at the activities of this group in this chapter. This will be undertaken in section 4.5.

4.2 Regeneration initiatives pursued by the Economic Development and Employment Committee

At first glance, the importance of the Economic Development and Employment Committee might seem minimal. Table 4.1 highlights the financial basis of the Committee. Despite enjoying a slight increase in the proportion of the council's overall budget across the 1980s, even at its highest level in the 1991-1992 financial year, the committee never consumed more than 0.7% of total expenditure. This is in line with both Cochrane (1990) and the Audit Commission's (HMSO 1989) observation that economic budgets for local authorities in the United Kingdom are in general below 1% of total council expenditure.

The real significance of the group however, is only realised when it is understood that its role is primarily to liaise with other committees on the council who are active in areas which might have economic implications. The actual expenditure of the group is only part of the overall budget discharged through the council therefore, towards the end of stimulating economic regeneration. Consequently, in examining the EDEC's plans, it is the key industrial strategies identified by the group to be central to Glasgow's regeneration, and not the overall expenditure or even expenditure by the committee on any single objective which is important.

Table 4.1 - Council expenditure through the Economic Development and Employment Committee

Year*	Total Council Expenditure (£)	Expenditure on EDEC (£)	% of Total
1981-1982	304,334,384	908,000	0.3%
1987-1988	464,883,000	2,380,000	0.5%
1991-1992	643,000,000	4,679,500	0.7%

* Financial Year ends on March 31st

Sources: Glasgow District Council (1982, 1988c), The Bulletin Feb 1991 p3

In the first Economic Plan in 1981 (Glasgow District Council, 1981), six regenerative policy areas were identified. These were:

1. To promote the city as a place to invest, and to market local firms outwith the city.
2. To provide assistance to local businesses (financial if appropriate), in particular small businesses, community workshops, and workers co-operatives.
3. To improve the environment of the older, run down, industrial parts of the city.
4. To make available good quality industrial land
5. To make available good quality industrial premises.
6. To provide retraining courses and job creation schemes alongside the Manpower Services Commission.

In the second plan published in 1983 (Glasgow District Council 1983), these six objectives were retained and four others were added:

7. To target regenerative programmes to areas of the city suffering particularly high levels of unemployment.
8. To encourage the development of the office sector.
9. To ensure the development of a strong retail sector.
10. To develop a tourist base to the local economy.
11. To provide help for unemployed people at all levels; including leisure and cultural facilities.

All eleven objectives were repeated in the third, fourth and fifth plans (Glasgow District Council 1984a, 1984b, 1985), and in the sixth, another three objectives were added:

12. To develop the clothing and textiles industries.
13. To use environmentally friendly energy resources.
14. To appraise ways in which the transport infrastructure might be improved.

All fourteen were retained in the sixth and seventh plans (Glasgow District Council 1987, 1988), however, following a gap of some three years, the final three failed to feature as key objectives in the latest plan published in February 1991 (Glasgow District Council 1991a). In this plan, one new objective was articulated;

15. To develop the cultural industries in the city.

Perhaps the first impression gained from these plans is that the regeneration policies pursued by the council

have lacked coherence. Indeed, with the introduction of objectives 12, 13, and 14 in the sixth plan, on the clothing and textiles industries, and energy and transport, respectively, it would appear that the council has had no single regeneration philosophy as such, but has simply instigated a whole spectrum of heterogeneous initiatives in the hope that things might improve.

In what follows, this apparent diversity of responses should be kept in mind. Nevertheless, concealed within the economic plans are a number of strands of thought which have to be brought to the fore. The first strand which stands as a foundational argument in this chapter, is that the council, in following the above policies, has shown a commitment across the period to helping the private sector in the city. In Harvey's (1989b) terms, it has shown qualities of 'entrepreneurialism' which sit in contrast with the 'managerialist' housing policies of the preceeding decades.

This claim has to be qualified immediately. The Economic Development and Employment Committee has persistently emphasised that its policies were and are designed with social as well as economic objectives in mind. And indeed, some of the above noted objectives illustrate a concern to assist local communities in the city who have suffered particularly severely in the context of decline. Objective 6, which brought attention to the need to retrain the

unemployed and to instigate job creation schemes for the long term unemployed in particular has, for instance, been a consistent feature in all eight plans to date. Further, objectives 7 and 11, dealing with the need to target economic projects towards particularly deprived areas, and the need to provide more informal assistance to the unemployed, have both persisted from the second plan onwards.

A recognition then, that at least some direct concern for social issues has permeated the activities of the committee is necessary lest the argument to be developed here be taken too narrowly. The movement towards more capital friendly measures has to be regarded as one of degree. Nevertheless, it still must be insisted that providing 'welfare for capital' was of major importance in the activities of the committee and the council more generally throughout the period of the 1980s (Keating 1988). Consequently, it comes as little surprise that out of the EDEC's total expenditure in the period 1990-1991 (£5,811,100), only 10.5% (£610,000) was spent on objectives 6, 7 and 11.

If providing 'welfare for capital' was prevalent in the actions of the committee, it remains to be explored precisely what type of 'welfare' was provided. In examining the above objectives in more detail, four areas of private sector assistance can be pointed to by way of introduction. First, with respect to objective 2, which recognises the

importance of providing assistance to small businesses, among other groups, the council throughout the 1980s offered free advice to those wishing to start up a new business. This advice related to such things as leasing and buying property. This service proved popular and between 1985 and 1986, the council dealt with over 1,600 enquiries from people wishing to set up their own business (Glasgow District Council 1987 p12).

Second, also with respect to objective 2, the EDEC offered loans and grants to small businesses to allow them to conduct market research studies, to promote their products, and to purchase machinery. Between 1989 and 1990, for instance, forty nine firms received financial assistance totalling nearly £70,000, most of which was in the form of grants rather than loans (Glasgow District Council 1991a p8).

Third, related to the objective of stimulating the office sector in the city (objective 8), the EDEC contributes to the production of a quarterly register of vacant offices. This ensures potential investors have full, clear and up-to-date knowledge of potential sites in Glasgow, without having to engage in primary research themselves. Further, the council has itself been active in marketing suitable GDC owned buildings as potential offices (Glasgow District Council 1991a p35).

Finally, regarding objective 5, that the council should ensure an availability of good quality industrial premises,

the EDEC has been active in refurbishing older buildings and making them accessible to private businesses. Some of these take the form of small workshops, which have provided homes for new enterprises. Between 1981 and 1991, the council managed to provide 12,725 sq m of additional industrial floorspace (Glasgow District Council 1991a p59).

The activities of the council with respect to these four examples offers a first basis for the claim that council has pursued a policy of providing 'welfare for capital' in the course of economic regeneration. Nevertheless, such activities remain somewhat orthodox aspects of council activity, being areas that most councils were active in in times prior to decline (Cochrane 1990). Whilst perhaps being pursued with more vigour, they do not constitute novel policies as such.

Concealed within a number of the above objectives, however, has been a strand of thought which has unquestionably been at the forefront of Glasgow's regeneration projects. This has involved a concern to market Glasgow to both investors and tourists. Particular emphasis has been given in this context, to changing the city at an aesthetic level. It is widely recognised that Glasgow has traditionally suffered from a number of image problems. Throughout the 1980s, these problems were recognised to be detrimental to the economic development of the city. Through the development of Glasgow's architectural and land use patterns, and its leisure and cultural amenities, new

efforts have been made to promote the city in a new and more positive light. By attending to the aesthetic qualities of the city, vigorous 'place marketing' has been undertaken.

In setting out this argument, care has to be taken not to presume that all aesthetic changes which have been made in Glasgow in the course of the 1980s were rooted in the philosophy of welfare for capital. This would presume that the new aesthetic qualities emerging were being wholly defined by the marketer, catering first and foremost for the tastes of investors or tourists, or whichever 'consumer' happened to be being targeted. As this thesis will show, it is an open question the extent to which the reaestheticisation of Glasgow has been primarily motivated by economic regeneration objectives.

Nevertheless, it is true to say that Glasgow suffered from image problems well before the regeneration initiatives of the 1980s were launched. Further, it has only been as a consequence of the recognition that negative images can effect local *accumulation* that image building has been taken seriously. 'Image consciousness', and the debates which currently circulate in Glasgow vis-à-vis how the city is perceived by outsiders, have to be understood as part of the turn by the District Council to assisting the local private sector.

Central to the image building strategy, has been the idea of

Glasgow as a post-industrial city. It was pointed out in the previous chapter, that since the Second World War, Glasgow's industrial base has moved away from Heavy Engineering and Shipbuilding to services. In line with this shift, the aesthetic based projects of the 1980s were designed to contribute to a service based economic revival. This is a theme which will be developed both in this chapter, and in chapter 6.

Two aspects of this turn towards the 'reaestheticisation' of the city will be considered here. First, the image building programmes which have dominated the 1980s will be discussed in section 4.3. Largely as a consequence of their role in image building, cultural facilities in Glasgow have themselves come to be seen as an important source of employment. That is, aside from their ability to improve Glasgow's image, cultural pursuits have come to be seen as of direct economic worth in their own right. As a consequence, the second area which will be considered is that of the growing importance of the 'Cultural Industries' (section 4.4).

4.3 'Image consciousness' and the reaestheticisation of Glasgow

The vigour with which place marketing has been pursued in Glasgow reflects the depth of 'image consciousness' which has prevailed in the city across the 1980s. This image consciousness has in turn had two facets. First, there has existed a widespread belief that Glasgow

has traditionally suffered from a number of negative images. Second, a current of thought has developed around the notion that new images have to be created through the development of the city's aesthetic infrastructure, and the pursuit of direct promotional campaigns.

4.3.1 Glasgow and negative images

Throughout the 1980s and during 1990, official commentary persistently made reference to the image problems Glasgow supposedly suffers from. A large scale investigation of the type of negative images which the city has conventionally been stigmatised with still remains to be undertaken. Such a project is outwith the scope of this thesis. In this section, the intention is simply to note some of the image problems which seem most prominent.

In the course of examining official statements on the City of Culture event, a record of the major image problems cited was compiled. Clearly, nothing statistical can be said on the basis of such a record. Nevertheless, by way of yielding insight, the following collection is submitted as covering the most common image problems associated with the city which appear in official rhetoric:

'violent' 'dirty' 'industrial slum' 'alcoholics'
'uncouth' 'inarticulate' 'midgets called Jimmy'

'bad weather' 'religious bigots' 'militant and full of unreasonable shop stewards'

More faith can perhaps be placed upon this somewhat superficial list if reference is made at this juncture to Damer's (1990a) commentary. From an appraisal of media representations of Glasgow from 1968 to the present day, Damer argues;

'It was not long before I realised something systematic was going on. From the New Statesman to the Guardian, and the Sunday Times to the BBC, not to mention the tabloids, a coherent imagery of the city was presented, an imagery whose parameters were so fixed that they constituted a stereotype. The stereotype was of a filthy, slum ridden, poverty stricken, gang infested city whose population consisted of undersized, incomprehensible, drunken, foul mouthed, sectarian lumpemproletarians who were prone to hit each other with broken bottles and razors without warning. To make matters worse, Glaswegians were infected with the Red Peril; Glasgow was a robustly socialist city. Its people actually believed in all that stuff about the Red Clyde.'

(Damer 1990a p5)

From my own field experience and Damer's study, three images might be picked out as being central to the image consciousness that developed during the 1980s. First, Glasgow's status as a declining industrial region would appear to have produced impressions of a slum city, riddled with poverty and showing physical evidence of decay. Secondly, the image of 'Red Clydeside' is still referred to locally, although in this instance, in largely negative terms. Finally and perhaps most importantly, Glasgow's reputation as a city of violence and gangland activity continues to be seen as strong and thus

problematic.

Reference requires to be made at this juncture to a book which is widely perceived to be one of the major sources of Glasgow's image problems - *No Mean City* (McArthur and Long 1972). *No Mean City* was first published in 1935. Since then, more than one million copies have been sold worldwide and around 3000 copies a year continue to be sold. According to Damer (1990b), *No mean City* is the book which commentators base their perceptions of Glasgow on.

The book tells the story of life in the notorious Gorbals area of the city in the 1930s. The central character is Johnnie Stark. Stark is a delinquent youth who suffered beatings from his father as a child. His goal is to become the 'Razor King' of the Gorbals. The story traces Johnnie's development from a fist fighter to a gang leader. Throughout his 'rise', one sees Johnnie develop a reputation for slashing faces and throats with razor blades. What is so potent in the novel is the social status ascribed by 'Gorbals folk' to people with proven fighting records. The more violent, the greater the respect. The picture of violence portrayed in the book is horrific. A fight between Johnnie and members of the rival 'Townhead gang' for instance, is described as follows;

'His eyes were glittering insanely and his bleeding lips were parted in an animal snarle ... one furious slash laid open an enemy's face from cheek bone to jaw; another

hideously gashed the second man's neck. Both collapsed, one of them with a thin, wild cry of anguish like a woman's.'

(McArthur and Long 1972 p123)

Engaging in theft and suffering one prison sentence after another, Johnnie is portrayed as becoming increasingly divorced from reality. Eventually he loses his title as Razor King and following a series of hefty beatings, is murdered by the 'East End' mob.

Violence is not the only theme running through the book. Nevertheless, it is the one which the book is most renowned for. Further, references continue to be made in the city to *No mean City* as a major source of the violent reputation of the city. In 1991 for instance, calls were made for the city to honour one of the authors (McArthur) posthumously. Refusing these claims, Council Leader Pat Lally argued,

'McArthur did neither Glasgow or the Gorbals any favours in writing the book...Although it was based on the circumstances of the the thirties, it remains a distorted work of fiction...For too long we have been stigmatized by its image.'

(Pat Lally Glasgow Herald 10/06/91a p1)

4.3.2 The process of reaestheticisation

If one side of image consciousness is an awareness of and reflection upon image problems, the other involves attempts to refashion images such that the object in question is seen in a new and more positive light. Efforts to

refashion Glasgow's image have been going on throughout the 1980s within the 'promotion', 'environmental improvement', 'tourist' and 'cultural industries' activities of the EDEC (that is objectives 1, 3, 10 and 15 noted above).

Marketing, nevertheless, made an earlier appearance in the city in the form of the Clyde Fair International held in 1972. This event certainly pre-dated the activities of the EDEC, however it can be regarded as the first stage in the much larger efforts which were to take place during the 1980s. The Clyde Fair International was funded by the Glasgow Corporation to the value of £30,000. It involved two weeks of operatic and orchestral performances, as well as other cultural pursuits. Held only in 1972 and 1973, the Fair was abandoned because of a lack of local support.

The image building *raison d'être* of the event was clearly seen by local commentators Trotter (1972) and Affleck (1973). Both pointed out that Glasgow had suffered economic hardships with many of the traditional industries closing. Both further talked about the need to attract inward investment and tourists, and the problems with Glasgow's image in this respect. The 'London Boardrooms', Trotter and Affleck suggested, saw Glasgow as 'strike prone', full of 'wild shop stewards', and 'violent'. Notice that these were the two negative images cited above. Through the event, people might come to see that Glaswegians were instead a 'friendly' and 'happy' lot.

It was not however, until the emergence of the EDEC in 1981, and Glasgow Action in 1985 (see section 4.5), that sustained efforts at revamping Glasgow's image were instigated. The first major project to attempt to reverse Glasgow's image problems, in the 1980s, was launched in 1983 by Lord Provost at the time, Michael Kelly. Kelly, acting on an idea advanced by Public Relations firm Struthers Advertisement and Marketing Ltd, launched the 'Glasgow's Miles Better' campaign. The 'crusade', Kelly announced, was needed because Glaswegians were conscious that perceptions of their city were 'outdated, inaccurate and unfair' (Struthers Advertisement and Marketing Ltd 1983 p1). The campaign, which ran from 1983 to 1990, was funded jointly by the public and private sectors in the city.

Using as its role model the 'I love New York' campaign, Struthers invented the slogan 'Glasgow's Miles Better'. It could be read as it was or as 'Glasgow smiles better'. Linked to this slogan were Mr. Men from the popular television series. Mr. American, Mr. Business, Mr. Hotels, Mr. Industry, all for example appeared alongside advertisements claiming that Glasgow was miles better for Americans, business, hotels, and industry. The project was initially targeted at 'ABC 1's' (business men and middle class tourists), reflecting the belief that a change in image could attract investment and tourists. Through the sale of such 'branded' merchandise as tee-shirts, mugs,

alarm clocks, and carrier bags, however, it also became popular locally.

The next major marketing campaign came in 1988 with the Glasgow Garden Festival. A piece of derelict wasteground around Glasgow's Princes Docks, was transformed into a miniature Disneyland. Sold as 'a day out of this world', this event was characterised by what Ley and Olds (1988) term 'heroic consumption'. New designer show houses, waterfront cafes, live radio programmes, exotic gardens, science centres and high technology simulator rides, were all available for 'consumption' on site. Funded to the value of £20 million from the Scottish Development Agency and £15 million from the private sector, the event proved to be central to the EDEC's activities during 1988.

These marketing tactics were matched throughout the period with sustained investment in Glasgow's leisure amenities. The Scottish Exhibition Centre for instance, was opened in 1985. This centre, located at the waterfront area across from Princes Docks, is capable of holding major pop concerts (of up to 12,000 people) as well as Trade Fairs and conferences etc. Further, in 1988, Glasgow's Kelvin Hall was converted from an exhibition hall to a major indoor athletic and leisure centre. It now hosts many of the major televised indoor athletic meetings in the United Kingdom.

Efforts were also made to improve the decaying physical

infrastructure of the city. Among the more important environmental improvements undertaken was the restoration of many of the city's old sandstone tenement blocks through extensive stone cleaning. Some of the key buildings in the city were also fitted with floodlighting facilities including the City Chambers, the Mitchell Library, Glasgow University and Central Railway Station. In addition, many of the old factories which had been abandoned, especially around the port area, were demolished and 'greened' over with landscape gardens.

In 1981, the EDEC also set up the Greater Glasgow Tourist Board (GGTB) headed by the colourful Eddie Freel. In 1983, this board ran a 'Welcome Home' campaign, which tried to attract expatriates back to the city for a holiday. The logic was that they would then carry the message of the new Glasgow out to further reaches. The campaign was popularly judged to have been a success. It was built upon in 1983 with the opening of the Burrell Collection and in 1988 with the Glasgow Garden Festival.

Marketing the city to tourists across the 1980s indeed became the major activity of the EDEC. From having the fourth largest expenditure in the 1985-1986 financial year (£349,300 or 12.2% of the overall budget (Glasgow District Council 1987 pp 105-108)), Tourism has emerged in the latest plan as the EDEC's most expensive policy area (with some 27% of the overall 1991-1992 budget (£1,248,800),

Glasgow District Council 1991a).

Further, in 1986, the GGTB opened up a special Convention Bureau. This was designed to capture a share of the increasing Conference and Convention market. It has served to underline the centrality of Tourism to the EDEC's regeneration activities. In line with the above comments vis-à-vis the post-industrial overtones of regeneration, it can be seen in this context that tourist related services have been a major beneficiary of the turn by the District Council to the philosophy of 'entrepreneurialism'.

4.4 The Cultural Industries

Initially, the transformation of Glasgow at an aesthetic level was geared towards attracting inward investment and tourists. Throughout the 1980s however, it became apparent that investment in culture could in itself function as a source of job creation. Consequently, attention became focussed upon aesthetic interventions not only in terms of their economic 'effects', but also in terms of their direct economic worth. Such an awareness can be traced first, to a number of projects undertaken in the early half of the decade. These included Mayfest International (an annual arts event which has run in the city since 1982), and the opening of the Burrell Collection in 1983. Despite the success of these projects, the Cultural Industries remained within the Economic Development and Employment Committee's objective of establishing a tourist

base to the local economy across the 1980s.

A major turning point in the recognition of the economic status of cultural activities came however, with the publication of a consultancy report in 1988 entitled, 'The Economic Importance of the Arts in Glasgow'. This report was commissioned by Glasgow District Council and Glasgow Action amongst other groups (Myerscough, 1988). It set out to quantify the economic value of the arts in Glasgow. It was undertaken over the period of the 1985/86 financial year. Three specific aspects of it emerged as particularly important.

First, the study attempted to evaluate the 'direct' economic importance of the arts sector. Three types of employment sources were identified. 'Main events and attractions', covering such things as Museums, Art Galleries, Theatres and Arts Centres, were shown to produce 1,821 jobs and to generate a turnover of £25.5 million. 'Own account artists', covering a number of more elusive, free-lance, smaller groups, was shown to account for 762 jobs and to produce a turnover of £4.9 million. Finally, 'Cultural Industries' (publishing, the art trade, designer trades, music industry, film and video production), were demonstrated to be responsible for 5,493 jobs and a turnover of £174 million. In total then, the arts sector was suggested to be directly responsible for about 8000 jobs, and a turnover of approximately £204 million.

Second, the report then attempted to estimate what it called the 'Full Productive Contribution of the Arts'. To begin with, the idea of the 'Customer Effect' was considered. This term was used to refer to secondary expenditure on transport, food, accommodation, etc, by people attending arts events. A total of £81 million, was associated with the 'Customer Effect' in Glasgow. Secondly, combining the £204 million generated directly by the arts, with the £81 million generated through the 'Customer Effect', Myerscough then undertook a Multiplier Analysis. Multiplier Analysis suggests that the full impact of an economic activity comes not merely through the initial cash injection but also through the 'ripple' effects which occur as that injection circulates through the economy.

The conclusion of the Multiplier Analysis was that some 14,735 jobs or 2.25% of the economically active population in the Strathclyde Region were dependent upon the arts. The arts were therefore, to be regarded as a major employer. Further, confining attention only to the category 'main events and attractions' and its 'Customer Effect', the report suggested that a substantial multiplier effect existed. Stated in crude economic terms, for every one job in a theatre or a museum, 2.74 jobs were 'created' elsewhere. On this basis, the arts were to be regarded as an excellent stimulant to local economies.

The third major area the report investigated was that of

the relative merits of investing public money in the arts, in comparison to other activities. The arts it was argued, were a cost-effective means of job creation. To remove one person from the unemployment register, only £1,361 of public money would have to be spent. This compared favourably to the £10,400 on Education and £10,700 on Health, that would be required to produce the same result. Following the publication of the Myerscough report, Glasgow District Council committed itself to invest in the city's cultural infrastructure. This investment formed part of the general aesthetic transformations reported upon above. Among the major capital projects completed towards the late 1980s and early 1990s were the construction of a new Concert Hall (£28.5 million), the refurbishment of the McLellan Art Galleries (£3 million) and the reconstruction of the old Transport Museum to the Tramway Theatre (£300,000) (Glasgow District Council 1991a).

By 1990, therefore, strong connections between cultural investment and economic revival were both being made, and influencing council expenditure. The project of reaestheticising the city had turned specifically towards the improvement of the city's cultural infrastructure. This was marked when in 1991, culture as an 'industry' emerged as one of the EDEC's main policy areas in its own right (Glasgow District Council 1991a).

4.5 Glasgow Action and the renewal of the City Centre

The other major body involved in Glasgow's regeneration programme was Glasgow Action. This group was formed in 1985 following the publication of a consultancy report prepared for the Scottish Development Agency by international business consultants McKinsey and Company and architect Gordon Cullen (McKinsey and Company 1985).

The report set out a strategy for the renewal of the City Centre. It focussed exclusively upon the service industries and was based on the premise that services could stimulate an economic regeneration of the city as a whole. The possibility of attempting to regenerate through manufacturing was ruled out from the outset. In the foreword to the report, George Mathewson, Chief Executive of the SDA at that time, summarised;

'We in the agency firmly believe that Glasgow can do it; can develop a strong enough service industry base to stimulate the economic regeneration of the city as a whole...Service industries provide the only realistic opportunity for employment growth in Glasgow. Although existing and new manufacturing plants will be an important generator of wealth, changes in technology and international competitiveness will mean that overall manufacturing employment in the Glasgow area will continue to decline.'

(Mathewson 1985 p3)

To this end, Mathewson identified the success enjoyed by two North American cities in particular, as the end point that Glasgow should be aiming for;

'If all those in a position to offer leadership and make a contribution do so, there is no reason why Glasgow, like comparable cities in the United States - Boston in

the past and Baltimore now - should not transform its economic prosperity.'

(Mathewson 1985 p3)

The two cities mentioned have well known reputations for recovering from a declining manufacturing base through an emphasis upon service industries. The perspective adopted then, followed the council in calling for a post-industrial future for Glasgow.

The strategy outlined in the consultancy report was organised into *two parts*. The *first part* sought to develop service industries in the City Centre directly. **Three** policy areas were identified. First, Glasgow had to increase the number of company headquarters located in the city. Whilst geared towards what it termed 'full managerial presence', it was recognised that even a simple increase in headquarter tasks, such as Research and Development, would be beneficial. To this end, it was suggested that attention should be paid to factors influencing headquarter relocation decisions, such as the quality of life in the city, the availability of high quality offices, sufficient airlinks with Europe, and so on.

The second objective was that Glasgow should develop an export base for its services. Emphasis here was placed upon the city's expertise in the field of Computer Software. Efforts were to be made to link up venture capital with advanced and innovative research going on in the city. Further, in order to match up academic research

at the city's two Universities (Glasgow and Strathclyde), with private industry, 'Centres of Excellence' were to be established within the Universities. Finally, ensuring that the developments therein were properly marketed, attention was to be given to the formation of international marketing channels. This strategy was different in orientation from the first in the sense that it involved encouraging local firms to compete better outside the city as opposed to marketing the city to outsiders.

The third objective involved the development of tourism in the city. In this context, improving outsiders' perceptions of the city was to play a critical role. The report suggested that improvement of the existing tourist facilities in the city should be augmented by the development of major new attractions. Among the suggestions advanced were the construction of an aquarium, exhibiting fish from all corners of the world, and an 'exploratarium', a science centre offering a 'hands-on educational experience'.

The *second part* of the strategy was designed to overlap the first. Through more general projects, a 'climate' was to be created which would assist the successful realisation of the *first part*. **Four areas** of attention were singled out. Each had some connection with the idea that Glasgow had to be marketed much more vigorously. Again, central to such marketing was a reaestheticisation of the City Centre. It is at this point that the activities of Glasgow Action

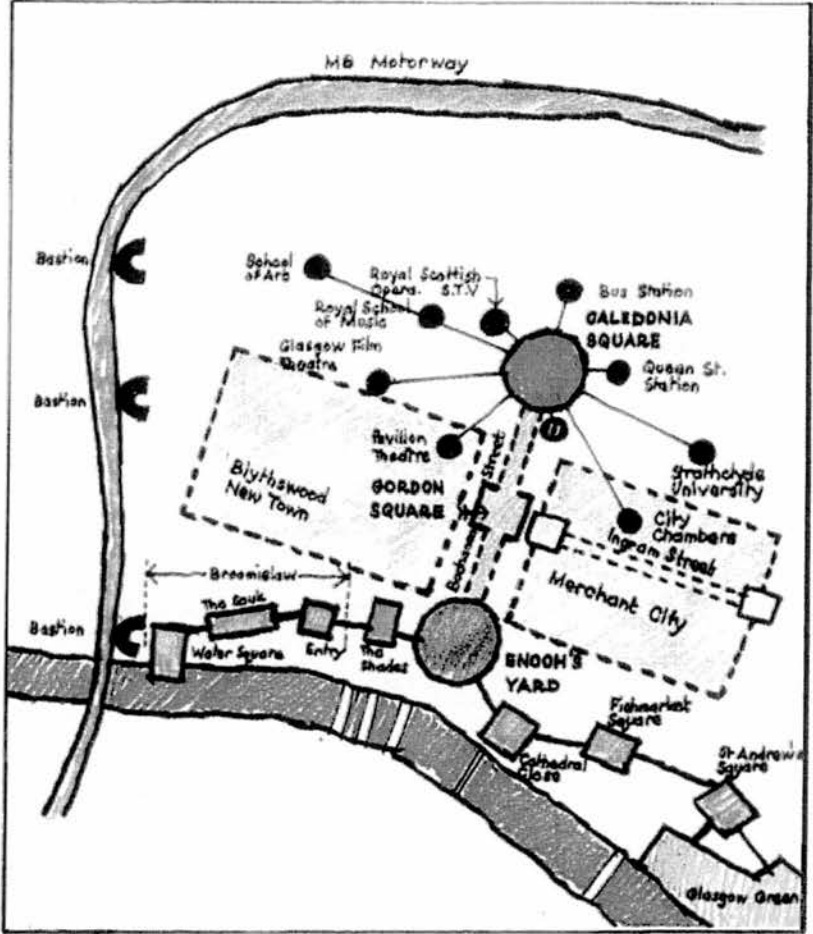
and the EDEC overlapped most. It is also at this juncture that one can appreciate the centrality of image building to Glasgow's regenerative programme overall.

a) First, Gordon Cullen was asked to design a plan that would improve the environmental quality of the city centre. Cullen's plan contained three central ideas (Figure 4.1). First, Buchanan Street was to become the focal point of the city (see Figure 4.1). To encourage this, it was proposed to locate a 'Civic Square' at the top of it (in red), and a shopping precinct at the bottom (in green). This Civic Square was to be the location of the headquarters of the major cultural organisations in the city.

Secondly, the waterfront area in the City Centre was to be developed into a 'Riverside Chain' comprising rehabilitated housing and office blocks. This chain would be marked by a number of focal points such as 'Cathedral Close', 'Fishmarket Square', and 'Waterfront Square' (see figure 4.1). Finally, the M8 motorway running around the City Centre was to be developed as a 'visual metaphor' of the 'Walled City'. This was to create a perception of the City Centre as a *Fortress*, protected by a number of 'bastions' which were to be constructed facing the M8 (see Figure 4.1).

b) Second, attention was to be given to the provision of consumer services in the City Centre. Shopping precincts, including high quality fashion centres, a thriving nightlife and cafe scene, and a wide range of restaurants

Figure 4.1 Gordon Cullen's Plan to reaestheticise Glasgow City Centre



(McKinsey and Co. 1984 p54)

and novel entertainment venues were to be encouraged to develop.

c) Third, it was suggested that Glasgow should be developed as a short course centre for middle to senior managers. This would encourage key decision makers to visit the city, and once there, to appreciate the environmental and consumer service improvements which had been made.

d) Finally, emphasis was also to be placed on taking the new image out to 'the people'. A vigorous marketing campaign, developing on from the Glasgow's Miles Better project, was required.

Having outlined the strategy of revival to be adopted, McKinsey and Company ended the report by suggesting a means through which it could be realised. An independent group consisting of a number of leading figures in the city was to be formed. The group was to be led by local business elites. This turn towards the private sector represented a distinct break with the idea that regeneration ought to be publicly controlled, and thus regulated by properly elected authorities. It was symptomatic of the broader consensus between the public and private sectors which took place in Glasgow during the 1980s.

Boyle (1988) suggests that in order to understand the emergence of Glasgow Action, attention has to be given to a series of trips the Scottish Development Agency made to the United States in the early 1980s. The American

connection has already been noted in relation to the service industry bias in the strategy. In this instance, it was strong private sector intervention in local economies in the United States which provided the role model. Boyle (1988 p81) argues;

'Both McKinsey and the SDA had been attracted by the US model of a partnership between private enterprise and public authority, where local business committees promote plans for city's development....Glasgow Action was born out of the USA public-private partnerships, and was influenced in no small way by the attractive combination of private leadership and private investment in the city of Minneapolis, Minnesota. Visitors from the SDA were particularly impressed by the activities of leading companies in the city, who supported a wider conception of corporate involvement in urban affairs.'

Glasgow Action was to be funded by the Scottish Development Agency. Its task was to be that of 'guardian of the vision' (McKinsey and Company 1985 p55). Each member of the group would identify individuals or groups in the city who might 'champion' particular projects. Using their specialist knowledge and stature in the community, members would ensure that ideas were circulated and feasible projects carried through. Glasgow Action then, was to;

'contribute ideas for projects, identify and motivate champions to lead them, and lobby local and national government and private business to mobilise support.'

(McKinsey and Company 1985 p56)

Almost exactly as the report suggested, Glasgow Action came into existence in late 1985. Consisting in the end of the Deputy Leader of the District Council, the Leader of Strathclyde Regional Council, the Principal of Strathclyde

University, a leading member of the legal profession, and ten local business men, the group was led by Sir (now Lord) Norman McFarlane, Chairman of United Distilleries (See Glasgow Action 1988 pp24-25).

After 1985, the group followed (albeit with slight deviations) the general guidelines set out in the McKinsey plan. In the three progress reports which were published (Glasgow Action 1987, 1988, 1991), for instance, the rigid structure of the strategy, namely two parts with three and four specific objectives in each respectively, was maintained as the organising framework. Further, many of the specific projects mentioned in the original report were at least attempted. The thinking behind the plan then, persisted across the period.

In line with the replacement of the SDA with the more locally accountable Scottish Enterprise (SEI), and the formation of the Glasgow Development Agency (GDA - the Glasgow branch of SEI), in April 1991, Glasgow Action was subsumed into the GDA who are now responsible for its tasks. It remains to be seen the extent to which the McKinsey plan will still provide the impetus or whether the GDA will pursue radically different policies. More or less the same board continues nevertheless, Chaired by Sir Norman McFarlane.

4.6 Summary

The purpose of this chapter has been to chart out the regeneration initiatives which were undertaken in

Glasgow during the 1980s. Two organisations, Glasgow District Council and Glasgow Action, were examined. Glasgow's regeneration, has, above all else, been motivated around a number of place marketing initiatives which have had at their heart the reaestheticisation of the city. By the end of the 1980s, Glaswegians had witnessed a massive expansion in consumption possibilities including a new Concert Hall, Exhibition Centre, athletic track, spectacular fun park, fashion outlets, wine bars, and shopping malls. Further, many aspects of the physical infrastructure of the city had been restyled. A decade of promotion had tried to ensure that Glasgow was no longer seen as a 'dirty', 'drab', 'violent', 'run down', 'industrial slum'.

The reaestheticisation pursued by both Glasgow Action and the Local Council, was rooted in the idea that Glasgow's recovery had to be through service industries. Manufacturing could not be expected to generate a revival. Among the service industries focussed upon have been Tourism and the Cultural Industries (the most important), the attraction of headquarter functions, and the development of an export base for local Computer Software firms.

It has been argued within, that the central philosophy implicit in the bulk of regeneration activities pursued has been that of public sector assistance of the private sector. Local capitalist interests, in particular those interests associated with the above service industries,

were thrust to the forefront during the 1980s. In the case of Glasgow Action, it was also observed that the private sector had to some extent become integrally involved in the actual implementation of regeneration projects.

Reflecting upon this close relationship between the public and private sectors in Glasgow during the 1980s, Sir Norman McFarlane, Chairman of Glasgow Action and now Glasgow Development Agency noted;

'Glasgow's business community has set an example of private sector involvement in the urban regeneration process to which many other cities are now responding. . Glasgow's approach to the economic situation it now faces is thoroughly business like and pragmatic. One of the major features of the city at present is that these business attributes are by no means confined to the private sector. Glasgow's unique corporate culture now embraces a wide range of public and private organisations, with enterprise and professionalism being as much a part of the work of staff in local government as it is of the city's business executives and entrepreneurs.'

(Norman McFarlane Glasgow Action 1988 p1)

Other less sympathetic commentators make the same point;

'when developers visited the city, they used to creep in at the side door. Now the councillors bring them in at the front door, one on each arm. Not only has it become respectable for councillors to be seen with developers, it has become imperative to be involved with them. It has got to the stage where councillors and developers have become indistinguishable. Indeed, the only way they can be told apart is that developers are always talking, and councillors always nodding.'

(Brendan McLaughlin 1990 p39)

In these statements, one gets a glimpse of the extent to which capitalist interests intruded into public life in the run up to the City of Culture event in 1990. It is now

time to turn attention to the City of Culture event. Through an examination of the way the local council rationalised about this event in public, an effort will be made in Chapter 6 to further clarify the importance of the 'welfare for capital ethos' underlying Glasgow's regeneration. As this will involve empirical material collected specifically for the thesis, attention has to be given first to the *methods* through which field material was collected.

CHAPTER 5 - METHODS

5.1 Introduction

The remainder of the thesis is based upon information collected specifically for this project. The purpose of this chapter is to outline the way in which this information was collected. It is important to be clear that this is primarily a *methods* and not *methodology* chapter. The methodological basis of the project has already been outlined in Chapter 1. The intention here is simply to deal with *practical* issues associated with data collection. In reading what follows, reference should be made to Appendix 1 where more detailed information on dates and times can be found.

The chapter is organised around six sections. The first four can be regarded as dealing with field issues as they arose chronologically. The primary aim of the data collection period was to gain insight into the types of debates that were taking place in the city. Given this, the first task was to clarify what the main lines of debate were, and who the key actors were. This required a period of *socialisation*. This period will be discussed in section 5.2. Having become acclimatised, it was then necessary to identify who the main participants in the debates were. Since reference will be made to them in the remainder of this thesis, the key actors will be identified in section 5.3.

Third, having clarified which debates appeared to be most important, the task then was to gather as much information as possible on them. A number of strategies were used in this context; assessing media coverage, interviewing, researching publications by the major actors, and attending meetings and demonstrations. These strategies will be detailed in section 5.4. Finally, in an effort to gain further insight into the debates which were arising, interviews were conducted with eighteen groups in the city. Section 5.5 will discuss the rationale for these interviews and their use in this thesis.

In the last two sections, attention will turn to more substantive issues. Since interviewing formed an important part of the field work, section 5.6 will outline the interviewing methods which were used, and the style in which these interviews will be reported. Finally, in section 5.7 the question of the *representativeness* of the material collected will be considered.

5.2 Getting to know the people and the issues

In Chapter 1, it was noted that cultural studies tend to draw upon *qualitative* as opposed to *positivist* methods (although the work of Pierre Bourdieu is an obvious exception). The interpretive approach entails getting down to earth and 'seeing' from the perspective of those under investigation - the process of *verstehen*. In practical terms, this means that research techniques are needed which allow

those under study to speak about the issues that are important to them; *in their own language*. Questionnaires have to be avoided as a consequence.

In the present context, the decision to study Glasgow's role as European City of Culture was taken in January 1990. At this point, the main task was to gain familiarity with the way this event was being talked about in the city. What were the main areas of debate ? The initial intention was to examine media coverage of the event as a 'way in'. The hope was that the main political issues would manifest themselves in the media. The advantage of looking at the media was that debates could be examined as they occurred *in practice*. Research influence would be at a minimum and debates could be examined within the terms of reference of those taking part.

It soon became apparent however, that whilst this basic principle would remain core to the research, it would have to be augmented by a wider understanding of the context within which debates were taking place. From an analysis of the media alone, it proved difficult establishing who the key actors involved were and what positions they were taking up.

At this point, a decision was made to contact the Festivals Office and ask if it would be possible to interview key personnel. The Festivals Office were in charge of the organisation of the event (see Chapter 6 for more details). The thinking was that by talking to

people at the centre of the debates, a better appreciation of the relative importance of certain issues which were appearing in the media could be gained. First contact with the Festivals Office had been made in March 1990 and an interview with Press Officer, Sam Warnock, undertaken (Appendix 1). This interview had proven useful and the hope was that the exercise could be repeated with other members of staff.

On approaching the Festivals Office, I was informed that given the nature of the research, the Press Office section of the Festivals Office would be the best place to begin with. This office dealt with all the major media issues related to the event. This included researching sources of criticism of the event, and formulating press releases putting forward the council's point of view. As such, the Press Office had its finger on the pulse of all the major debates that were going on locally (and beyond).

Jill Campbell McKay, head of the Press Office, was approached in mid July. Following discussion, it was agreed that I should spend some time actually working at the Press Office. This was to be voluntary. In return, I would be allowed access to the media coverage of the event being compiled at the office, and would be given interviews with key members of staff. My time at the Press Office lasted five weeks (August 1st to September 6th, 1990).

Working in the Festivals Office proved decisive in

my efforts to become socialised into the major debates which were taking place in the city. It allowed me to clarify who the main actors involved in the debates were, and what positions they held. Three aspects of my time spent at the Festivals Office have to be commented on in this regard.

First, being part of the Festivals Office brought a better understanding of the issues which officials of the event were having to confront. In seeing them discuss problems and formulate responses to critics, a deeper appreciation of the context within which the office operated was obtained. I was better able to make sense of the issues I had discovered in the media, and to prioritize these issues.

It is instructive to give an example at this point. In early August 1990, a critic of the event published an article in the New Statesman and Society magazine (Kelman 1990a). This article generated a debate in that magazine which continued until the end of September 1990. Aspects of this debate will be discussed in this and later chapters. What is important for the present purposes is the fact that officials in the Press Office entered into much discussion throughout August about how best to reply. These discussions were informal, often taking place over coffee. Nevertheless, they were instructive in yielding insight into what type of criticisms the office faced, and the lines of argument that were used by way of reply.

A second way in which working at the Festivals Office was productive was in providing an opportunity to interview key officials. Trying to secure an interview prior to working at the office had proven difficult. Having worked at the office, it became apparent why this was so. Time constraints were severe and staff were constantly inundated with requests to give interviews to the local, national and international media. Against this context, academic projects ranked as low priority.

Working in the office, however, allowed me to gain familiarity with staff and to explain the nature of the research to them. Having become more integrated into the group, it became substantially easier not only to get an interview but to gain more in-depth discussion. The interviews were important to this end in generating further discussion on issues that had come to light in the course of the five weeks I had spent at the office.

The third reason working at the Festivals Office proved critical in efforts to become socialised into the major debates, relates to the acquisition of media coverage. Up to August, the examination of media coverage had largely involved, in retrospect, somewhat partial scrutiny of references to the event being made in the major newspapers. The Press Office had made it a policy to collect all media coverage of the event from early 1989 onwards. A substantial media library had built up as a consequence. This library included:

1) Press cuttings on the event. Coverage was both national and international. The Festivals Office took delivery of *all* the major national papers and made daily cuttings of articles that had relevance to Glasgow 1990. It also employed professional agencies in London to sift through national and international papers and magazines, and provincial press throughout the United Kingdom. Further, since the Festivals Office was active in giving guided tours to most visiting journalists, it managed to obtain copies of the articles these journalists were subsequently producing. It is important to emphasise how exhaustive the collection was. Searching for articles which were critical of the event was given as much if not more attention.

2) Transcripts of radio programmes. Once more professional agencies were paid to monitor local and national radio broadcasts which had relevance to 1990. Further, they were asked to produce ready made transcripts of this coverage. As a measure of the depth of information obtained, even thirty second news bulletins on the event were collected.

3) The Festivals Office also had its own video recorder and television. Television programmes on the event, and once more important news items, were taped. The collection of television programmes built up however, was not as exhaustive as that of radio and newspaper items.

The Press Office's library of media coverage of the City

of Culture event therefore, represented a substantial data source. Towards the middle of 1990, it was decided that this library was to be organised into a series of books which would provide a permanent record of the event. The problem which emerged at this juncture, was that two copies of almost every important article (and some not so important) which had been collected had been kept. In order to avoid including the same article twice in the finished books, it was decided to sift through the collection and to produce a single set.

It was at this point that I approached the Festivals Office. My job became that of checking for doubles and organising the material for entry into the books. This proved useful in the first instance in that in having to go through every article which the office had, and to understand enough about the article to categorise it, I became thoroughly familiar with almost every aspect of the event which the media had covered. Further, in realising that the intention was to throw out doubles, an approach was made to Jill Campbell McKay and permission granted to take away any article which had a partner. Since all the important articles and radio programmes had been copied, this meant that I was able to build up a substantial personal library on 1990.

Finally, the timing of the work experience proved to be ideal. A substantial amount of controversy had already been generated by the time the period of employment

began. In particular, the so called 'Elsbeth King Affair' which is the subject of attention in Chapter 8, was in its advanced phases. Discussion between the council and critics was therefore, at a well developed stage. Consequently, it was possible in the course of the fieldwork, to gain wider reflection on issues which had already been identified and discussed. If the work experience had been at the start of 1990, the ability to gain insight into the debates would have been lost. 'Thick description' only comes from being in the 'thick' of debates.

5.3 The major actors

Following my period of employment at the Festivals Office then, I had a good idea of the major debates taking place in the city vis-à-vis the City of Culture event, and the major actors involved. Since mention will be made of these actors throughout the thesis, it is useful to identify them at this stage. The key actors can be grouped into two camps; 'officials' and 'critics'.

'Officials'

Without question, the most important official during 1990 was Councillor Patrick Lally. Lally was leader of the Labour Party in the city and thus leader of the council. He had held this position since defeating Jean McFadden in 1986. McFadden was Council Treasurer during 1990. Lally sat on all the major committees which had a say on the City of

Culture event. In particular, he chaired the Festivals Office Committee. He came to be regarded as the main figure behind the event.

Among the other important officials were Robert (Bob) Palmer and Neil Wallace. Palmer was Director of the Festivals Office, and Wallace, Deputy Director. Both had only limited experience in local government prior to 1990. Palmer's background was in the field of visual arts, in particular Ballet. Wallace, similarly, had an arts background. His interests were rooted in, among other things, 'experimental theatre'. Also important in the cultural sphere was Julian Spalding, Director of the city's Art Galleries and Museums. Whilst not central to the programming of the year, Spalding was involved in a number of major 1990 projects. The most prominent of these was the Glasgow's Glasgow exhibition. Finally, Barbara Orton was responsible for 'community involvement' in the event.

As noted above, Jill Campbell McKay was head of the Press Office. Her background was in Public Relations. For instance, prior to arriving in Glasgow in 1989, she worked with Andrew Lloyd Weber's *Really Useful Theatre Company*. Other important actors in the Press Office were Sam Warnock and Jim Waugh, both Press Officers, and Ian Black, who compiled Event Listings for the local press.

'Critics'

The main voice of opposition during 1990 came from a group called *Workers City*. *Workers City* was the title given to a rather loose group of political activists and leading cultural figures who came together to challenge the local Labour group's approach to the regeneration of the city. Whilst writing under this banner prior to 1990, (McLay 1988a), the group only really came together in March 1990. Based at the Scotia bar at the bottom of Stockwell Street in the City Centre, the group had some 40 hard core members.

The unofficial leader of *Workers City* might be said to be James Kelman (indeed members of the group were often referred to as 'Kelmanites'). 'Unofficial' is the most appropriate word to use however, since, the group vigorously resisted hierarchic structures. Kelman is an internationally renowned writer whose work was recently assessed in the *New York Review of Books* (Craig 1991a). His book *A Disaffection* (Kelman 1989), was shortlisted for the Booker Prize in 1989. Showing his commitment to working class Glasgow, Kelman was instrumental in setting up the Free University of Glasgow, an institution which holds regular lectures designed to help those barred from formal education by virtue of their financial circumstances. Kelman might be regarded as the intellectual force behind the group and tended to represent the mouthpiece of *Workers City* on those occasions when dialogue was generated with Glasgow

District Council.

Michael Donnelly was also a key figure in the group during 1990. Donnelly was Assistant Curator of the People's Palace museum in Glasgow up until August 1990 when he was sacked over his role in what has since become known as the 'Elspeth King affair' (Chapter 8). The People's Palace is a museum geared towards the celebration of Glasgow's working class history. The Affair represented one of the biggest controversies in 1990 and Workers City were heavily involved in it. As a result of his sacking, Donnelly became publicly associated with Workers City who had acted in defence of him throughout the affair, and proved to be one of the group's media celebrities.

Three other important members of the group were Hugh Savage, Farquhar McLay and Brendan McLaughlin. Savage, a retired plumber, played an important role in the Elspeth King Affair in his capacity as Chairman of the Friends of the People's Palace. Savage's main contribution seemed to be as an organiser of demonstrations. This derived from his disillusionment with *organised* working class institutions and his 'do it yourself' philosophy. Farquhar McLay exerted influence through his role as editor of Workers City's two major publications (McLay 1988a, 1990b). Finally, Brendan McLaughlin, an Arts Graduate, contributed to a number of public debates which took place during the year.

Aside from Workers City, it is possible to identify at

least four other important actors who were critical of the District Council during 1990. These actors will be widely quoted herein as being *part* of the Workers City critique. This is because whilst not formally part of the group, they were nonetheless drawing upon similar arguments to Workers City. Further, they explicitly expressed sympathy with the group in the public statements they made during 1990.

First, Sean Damer, a Senior Research Fellow in the Centre for Housing Research at the University of Glasgow, emerged as an important contributor to the debate. A Social Historian, Damer's research interests revolve around the analysis of Glasgow's working class 'cultural' traditions (see Damer 1990a for instance). It was largely in sympathy with that tradition that he embarked upon a critique of the actions of the District Council.

Second, local journalist and film maker David Kemp expressed his support for Workers City in a number of public debates. On some occasions, this took the form of articles in the local Glasgow Herald, Kemp's criticisms of 1990 nonetheless, appeared most frequently in the journal *Artwork*. His contributions to this journal were collected together towards the end of 1990 in a book entitled, *Glasgow 1990 : The true story behind the hype* (Kemp 1990). Trained as an Investigative Journalist, Kemp played an important role in uncovering some of the more concealed details of the Elspeth King Affair.

Thirdly, Bert Moorehouse, a Sociologist at the University of Glasgow, became active in the context of a research project he instigated into the economic impact of 1990. This project was funded to the value of £42,000 by the Leverhulme Trust and was particularly important because, unlike a similar project undertaken by John Myerscough, it was completely free of District Council influence. Whilst rejecting the extremist elements of Workers city, Moorehouse's comments fitted into the overall Leftist critique which built up during the year.

Finally, Janey Buchan, a Labour MEP for the Strathclyde Region, helped Workers City by using her position to gain publicity, at various points in the year, for the issues which the group were campaigning on. Her role in the Elspeth King Affair was particularly significant.

5.4 The main information sources

Having familiarised myself with the main debates taking place and the key actors behind those debates, the task then was to gather as much information about the people and the issues as possible. Clearly, not all statements made by the key actors were of equal significance. The task was to establish the main occasions when *important* statements were made. In this section, a description of the *major* information sources used will be offered. Attention will be given to media coverage, interviews,

publications, and attendance at meetings and demonstrations, respectively.

Media Coverage

Whilst media coverage was augmented using information from other sources, it nevertheless remained a core element of the data collected. The personal media library built up whilst working at the Festivals Office was substantial. In the end, over 3,100 newspaper articles and fifty eight radio transcripts were obtained. The problem at the end of my period at the Festivals Office however, was that there was still some three months to go until the event finished. Further, it was expected that some relevant media coverage would occur after 1990. Permission was given to return to the Festivals Office for updated information. However, since only single copies of articles were being kept at this point, no additions to my personal library could be made.

Further, towards the end of the year the compilation of the collection slowed down. With the absence of the curator through illness, the coverage being collected was not being filed properly. For it to have been of any use, I would have had to return to the office and work for another five weeks. Time constraints and the inefficiency of such an exercise prevented this from being a possibility. As an aside, despite efforts to find out, the current status of the books being compiled remains unclear. If they were completed, they represent a major data source for future

research on the topic.

To compensate for this, assisted by contacts within the Festivals Office and beyond, an effort was made to personally collect the major articles, and radio and television programmes on the event which appeared after September 1990. In the end, a further 124 newspaper articles, 5 radio, and 4 television programmes were collected.

Whilst reference is made to national newspapers within, coverage of the City of Culture event tended to be most evident in the local and regional media. It is therefore useful to identify these agencies here. First, the main local newspapers in the city are the *Glasgow Herald* (now called simply *The Herald*) and the *Evening Times*. Whilst the latter is self consciously 'tabloid', the former is regarded as more geared towards an intellectual readership. Both nevertheless have wide circulation in the city. During 1990, the *Glasgow Herald* proved to be sympathetic to Workers City and helped it gain publicity; particularly in the context of the Elspeth King Affair. The local radio station is called Radio Clyde. This station broadcasts on two wavelengths. Radio Clyde 1 is targeted towards the 'younger' listener, whilst Radio Clyde 2 is more geared towards an 'older' audience. Broadcasts on the City of Culture event referred to in this thesis derive from Radio Clyde 2. Finally BBC 1 Scotland broadcast a political/documentary programme called 'Focal Point'.

It represents a watered down version of 'World in Action'. During 1990, one episode was devoted to the City of Culture event.

In using media material, particular stress has been placed upon public debates in which officials and critics have come together to advance their particular points of view. Since frequent reference will be made to six such instances in the thesis, it is useful to draw attention to them at this stage.

a) In June 1990, Pat Lally published a 2000 word response in the Glasgow Herald to Workers City's critique of the City of Culture event (Lally 1990a). James Kelman replied to this article on behalf of Workers City in a follow up article in the Glasgow Herald, in July 1990 (Kelman 1990c).

b. James Kelman published an article criticising the council in the New Statesman and Society in August 1990 (Kelman 1990a). This prompted letters of reply from Julian Spalding (1990), Robert Palmer and Neil Wallace (1990), and Pat Lally (1990b), against, and Janey Buchan (1990b), High Savage (1990), and Michael Donnelly (1990b), for.

c) Bob Palmer took part in a live debate on the event with Sean Damer on Radio 3 in October 1990 ('Third Ear' Radio 3 3/10/90).

d) BBC 1's Political/Documentary programme 'Focal Point' broadcast a 'reflection' on the event in December 1990.

In this programme, Michael Donnelly, Brendan McLaughlin, Farquhar McLay, Bert Moorehouse and Sean Damer argued the Workers City case, whilst Pat Lally and Julian Spalding defended the council (BBC 1 Focal Point 11/12/90).

e) Pat Lally, Bob Palmer, and Bert Moorehouse took part in a live discussion on the event broadcast on Radio Clyde 2 in December 1990 ('Whose Culture' Radio Clyde 2 20/12/90)

f) The event was discussed in detail in a debate on 'The Future of the Left in Glasgow' which was broadcast by Scottish Television in July 1991. Pat Lally and James Kelman took part in this debate (STV 'Night Flyte' 4/7/91)

Interviews

Having become acquainted with the main issues and personalities, a major research task became that of *networking*. By this is meant the tracking down of key actors and other important commentators and getting them to clarify/refine/add to the interpretation of the debates which had been built up. This represented a period of research *structuration*; early interpretations were influencing the networking process, however this process was informing and changing early interpretations. There is no systematic way of going about *networking*. So much relies on the researcher's sensitivity in understanding who has to be spoken to, and about what.

The first people interviewed were staff at the Press Office. Four interviews were conducted with Neil Wallace, Jill Campbell McKay, Sam Warnock, and Ian Black, respectively. These were followed up with interviews with David Kemp, Ann Mearns (Deputy Town Clerk), David Harding (Head of Environmental Art, Glasgow Art school), George Wylie (a well known commentator on the local arts scene), local journalist (with the Evening Times) Marian Pallister, and David Inglis (Manager of the Environmental Improvement Department at British Rail) (see Appendix 1). Contact was kept up with David Kemp in particular, who provided lots of useful background information to the controversies which surrounded the event. Contact was also made with Colin James of Glasgow District Council, and Ian Waterston of Strathclyde Regional Council, who provided information on the financial background to the event. Only some of these interviews were taped and transcribed. Notes were taken at the end of those that were not.

It is important to be clear about what this period of *networking* was trying to accomplish. Its function was not to generate raw data as such, although it proved useful in doing this. The purpose of the thesis was to examine debates as they occurred in *practice*. Consequently, networking was undertaken with a view to *clarifying* debates, rather than *opening* them up. Its purpose was to better understand debates taking place elsewhere.

Publications

Extensive use is made of a number of major publications by Workers City and affiliated critics. Of paramount importance were, the groups two major publications, *Workers City : the real Glasgow stands up*, published in the run up to 1990 (McLay, 1988a), and *Workers City : the Reckoning* (McLay, 1990a), published towards the end of 1990 as a summary of their year's achievements. The books consist of articles, short stories, and poems compiled by over 30 different members of the group. Only some of the contributions take to do specifically with 1990, but all are important in facilitating an understanding of the group's relationship with working class people and working class movements.

Publications by David Kemp and Sean Damer are also used herein. As noted above, Kemp's contributions to the journal *Artwork* were collected together in a book entitled, *Glasgow 1990 : The true story behind the hype* (Kemp 1990). Damer's position on the City of Culture event was clearly outlined in his book *Glasgow : going for a song* (Damer 1990a).

Public meetings and demonstrations

The critics expressed their point of view more directly in the form of various public protests and public meetings organised during the year. Two protest marches were attended as a bystander - that which took place outside

the Glasgow's Glasgow exhibition in Glasgow City centre on the opening day of the exhibition (April 12th 1990), and that which took place outside the City Chambers on June 8th 1990 regarding the 'Elspeth King Affair'. Both proved significant in the early stages of the research, in clarifying precisely whom was putting forward the most conspicuous voice of opposition to the City of Culture event.

Perhaps the most important meeting attended in the examination of the official perspective, was that at the Festivals Office on Monday August 27th 1990. This meeting was chaired by Pat Lally and Bob Palmer and involved the unveiling of the programme for the last quarter of the year. Some 45 journalists from all over the United Kingdom and beyond attended this meeting. This meeting, more than other incident during 1990, brought home the fundamentally PR nature of the City of Culture event.

Finally, a lecture at the Transmission Gallery organised by the Free University of Glasgow on October 11th 1990 was attended. This lecture, entitled 'The value of rank and file, direct action', was delivered by Hugh Savage of Workers City and the ensuing question time, which lasted for 90 minutes, was chaired by James Kelman. The period of question time proved useful in getting first hand background to the group and its position on the event. Discussion was casual and among the topics explored were Glasgow's economy and what to do about it, and how to

understand class conflict around the means of *consumption*.

5.5 Group Interviews

In early October 1990, it was decided to add to the examination of the main debates taking place by interviewing various groups in the city. The intention was to chose groups that might throw more light on issues which had been generated in the main debates. That is, the rationale for doing the group interviews was to generate more information on themes that were already emerging as important.

At this point, it was becoming obvious that the cultural substance of the City of Culture event was proving to be a source of conflict in the city. As Chapters 7 and 8 will indicate, Workers City in particular were suggesting that the event had nothing for the 'ordinary' person. Given this, a decision was made to examine groups who *had* become involved in the City of Culture event to see how they were negotiating this conflict. Why did they become involved ? Why did they not *read* the event in the same ways as the critics ? Or did they ?

The specific allegation was that the event had no relevance to *working class* people in the City. Given this, emphasis was placed on groups from the peripheral schemes and other working class areas in the city. At this point, more than 400 projects had still to be completed. Even given the restrictions set by the underlying rationale,

this represented a large set from which to choose. Given that I was approaching groups from the perspective of gaining insight into issues which I was already interested in however, some groups became more 'visible' than others.

At this point, meetings with Ian Black and Barbara Orton were arranged. Given their respective positions within the Festivals Office (see 2.3), they had a good knowledge of the types of projects that were going on. The aim of the group interviews was explained and discussion took place as to which groups would be best to study. Within the constraints of the rationale for interviews, it was decided to examine as wide a range of groups as possible. In the end, some fifteen groups involved in the event were examined (see Appendix 1). Three groups not involved in the event were also examined. The rationale for studying these groups is given in Chapter 7.

Each of the groups were interviewed. Interviews lasted between 30 minutes and 2 hours 15 minutes. In some cases, only one representative of the group participated. In others however, two or more took part, with the maximum being five. On reflection, multiple participation was preferable. Some of the most interesting material was produced through argument between group members. All fifteen interviews were taped and transcribed.

First drafts of transcribed interviews were sent back to all groups. This was done for two reasons. First, it was good ethical practice. Second, it allowed me to sustain

contact with the groups and thus gain further insight. Groups were told to get in contact if they did not wish to have a particular part of an interview quoted, or if they did not want to be publicly associated with a particular point of view. In a sense, officials and critics were already in the 'public' domain and therefore quoting from them seemed less of an issue. In the end, only four groups replied. In each case, the reason for replying was the clarification of a section of the discussion. In no case did groups express a wish to remain anonymous. Indeed, they were keen that their efforts were given public recognition.

Aside from interviews however, many other strategies were adopted. A visit was made to eleven of the fifteen groups prior to the interview. On these occasions, an informal 'tour' of the project was normally given. These visits proved helpful in introducing myself to the groups and gaining their confidence. They also made the interviews undertaken more useful since more informed discussion could take place. This process was also assisted by information obtained on the groups from the media library built up whilst at the Festivals Office.

An effort was also made to examine the groups *at work*. This included attending; a play, photographic exhibitions, a choir practice, an anti-British National Party slide show, organ practice, Ceramics classes, the unveiling of a Sculpture, and a percussion lesson. This were perhaps the most enjoyable aspect of the fieldwork exercise! It nevertheless proved

extremely useful when it came to analysing the interviews.

5.6 Interviewing technique and implications for the style of presentation

In all of the interviews undertaken, no formal interviewing schedule was as such used. Certainly, interviews were approached with a purpose. However, in all cases, discussion was left open and almost without exception the information gained expanded far beyond that initially sought. In line with the quasi-ethnographic methodological basis of the work (as outlined in Chapter 1), the principle guiding all interviews was that of letting the person involved talk about the issues that they themselves thought were important.

For instance, in the interviews with the groups, I began with a broad explanation of the area I was interested in talking about (noted above), and then made the following statement; 'perhaps you could now tell me a bit about yourself and what it is you do here'. Conversation generally flowed after this. Again so much rests on the interviewer. It is imperative in this type of interview format to be listening to the respondent carefully, whilst at the same time turning what is being said into another question. A sensitive ear and quick mind can produce a level of insight that goes far beyond the more orthodox questionnaire and structured interview schedule.

As a result, each interview undertaken was unique. Rarely were identical questions asked between interviews. Consequently, it is not appropriate to include in the thesis a list of the questions which were asked in each case. A separate list would have to be generated for each interview.

It might be objected that a list of questions is necessary so that the reader can understand the context within which quotes selected from the interview have been given. The strategy adopted here to cope with this, has been to outline the particular context within which a quote from an interview is taken. In some cases, this has involved giving an indication of the question the quote represents a response to. In others, an indication of the content of the discussion up to the point at which the quote is taken is given.

5.7 The question of representativeness

In ending this chapter, it is useful to make brief mention of the question of 'representativeness'. A standard requirement of the more 'scientific' methodologies is that a *measure* of the representativeness of the phenomena being studied be obtained. In the present context, this might mean assessing the extent to which the position of officials or the critics is shared among the wider Glasgow population. Just how *strong* is the critique ?

One of the foundational arguments for more qualitative methods however, is that in order to produce *thick*

description, a concern with representativeness must be traded in for better *understanding*. The methods required to assess the representativeness of phenomena generally involve large scale surveys. Understanding in contrast, only comes from 'getting down' among those under investigation - in this case immersing oneself in the debates which were taking place in Glasgow.

Consequently, it is important to reiterate that no claims can be made herein, about the strength of opposition to the council during 1990. The task is simply to explore the different *perspectives* which were in use. To use the language outlined in Chapter 1, the primary task is to examine the different *interpretive communities* within which Glasgow's regeneration efforts are being understood.

Nevertheless, it is not necessary to be overly apologetic. Clearly, when conducting this research decisions have been made about the relative importance of some arguments. Quotes have not been selected from *any* source. The basis for selecting some quotes and rejecting others clearly reside in the theoretical categories which underpin the work, and the assessment on the basis of those categories of the significance of the data sources. On the basis of these theoretical categories, *qualitative* judgements have implicitly been made about the relative strength of certain arguments.

For instance, substantial use of the media has been made in this project. This is because comments made in radio interviews about Glasgow's political scene are more important than casual exchanges in a pub for instance. The *forum* adds significance to the statement. Further, that some arguments are used in a great variety of media sources is indicative of their strength. In other occasions (for instance the Elspeth King Affair - Chapter 8), glimpses of the significance of issues among the local community can be gained from such evidence as the amount of 'letters to the editor', the degree of media coverage of the issue, the seniority of the people taking part in the debate, the magnitude of public meetings and petitions etc.

I would argue therefore, that it seems overly extreme to suggest that just because one has no numerical evidence about the strength of a point of view, no position can be taken up. Researchers study things because they seem important. The 'sense' of importance of an issue is just as significant as a statistical measure. Consequently, the *assertion* advanced here is that the debates examined within are not merely 'some among many'. In Glasgow during 1990, they had an *important* (albeit unspecified) influence on the extent to which the District Council was able to legitimate itself to the community. It now remains *my* task to convince the reader of this *assertion*.

CHAPTER 6 - THE EUROPEAN CITY OF CULTURE EVENT AS AN EXERCISE IN ECONOMIC REGENERATION

6.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to make a preliminary examination of the extent to which Glasgow's role as European City of Culture 1990, was appropriated by District Council Officials as part of the wider efforts made in city in the 1980s to use culture as a vehicle for economic regeneration. That is, concern in this chapter is with instances when officials explicitly referred to the event within the terms of reference of economic recovery..

As this is the first time the event has been discussed, attention will be focussed initially upon the concept of 'European City of Culture' itself, and how Glasgow managed to win it (section 6.2). This will lead into a reflection upon the extent to which Glasgow's 'image consciousness' manifested itself in the way the event was organised and financed (section 6.3). The remainder of the chapter seeks to highlight the way officials themselves sought to justify the event, in public, within the terms of reference of economic regeneration (section 6.4).

Three sources of information are drawn upon. First, discussion is informed by the period of work experience at the Press Office. In the present context, this experience proved useful in obtaining a general understanding of the workings of the Festivals Office, the European City

of Culture concept, and how Glasgow managed to win it. Secondly, field interviews with four Festivals Office Officials are used. Finally, quotes are taken whenever possible from the media library built up during the year. Since the objective of the thesis is to examine the various debates which took place in Glasgow over the City of Culture event, an effort has been made to cite official accounts offered up in the course of 'real' debate 'on the ground'.

6.2 Glasgow and the European City of Culture concept

The idea of awarding the title European City of Culture to particular cities was originated by Greek Minister of Culture, Melina Mercouri. The idea was discussed at a meeting with Europe's twelve Ministers for Cultural Affairs in Brussels on the 4th of June 1985, and EEC Resolution 'Cult 64', subsequently passed.

'Cult 64' was organised into three sections : 'Aims and Content', 'Selection Criteria' and 'Organisation and Finance'. First, with regards to the 'Aims and Content' of City of Culture events, the thinking behind the initiative was that by providing a European focus, and stimulating the exchange of cultures within the EEC, a more 'European' consciousness might emerge;

'The event has been established to bring the peoples of the member states closer together.'

(EEC Resolution Cult 64 4/6/85 p1)

Places awarded the title should seek to show their culture to the rest of Europe and invite Europeans to expose locals to other cultures.

Regarding 'Selection Criteria', it was decided that all twelve European countries should be awarded the title in alphabetical order. The government of the chosen country would then have the responsibility of selecting the most appropriate city for the title. A full round of awards would have to be made before the title could return to any particular country. To date, starting with Athens in 1985, City of Culture awards have been made to Florence (1986), Amsterdam (1987), Berlin (1988), Paris (1989), Glasgow (1990), Dublin (1991) and Madrid (1992). From this list, it is apparent that the principle of rotating the award on the basis of alphabetical order has not been adhered to in practice.

Finally, the 'Organisation and Financing' of the event was to be left to the discretion of individual member states. The Minister for Cultural Affairs in each of the selected countries had to decide at what level of authority responsibility was to lie.

It was against the backdrop of this resolution that it was decided in 1985 that the European City of Culture award was to come to the United Kingdom in 1990. In April 1985, The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) was asked by the Office of Arts and Libraries (O.A.L.) to

nominate a number of Scottish cities for the award. Four cities, Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, and Glasgow, were selected. In February 1986, the O.A.L. approached Glasgow for an official submission.

In April of the same year, Glasgow District Council made this submission; which included over fifteen letters of support from other relevant institutions in the city (including Glasgow Action). On the basis of the submission, Glasgow was placed in August 1986, on a shortlist with eight other contenders: Edinburgh, Liverpool, Leeds, Bristol, Bath, Cardiff, Swansea, and Cambridge.

A supplementary submission was called for and once more Glasgow District Council responded with more detailed information about prospective events and expected expenditure. On October 20th, 1986, Richard Luce, then UK Minister for Arts, announced that Glasgow was to be his nomination for the United Kingdom's European City of Culture celebration in 1990. In November 1986, his selection was ratified by Europe's eleven other Ministers for Cultural Affairs and Glasgow was officially awarded the title. No effort will be made here to account for Glasgow's success. Nevertheless, it should be noted that in making their supplementary submission, Council Officials promised Central Government that they would not ask for any financial support from the O.A.L..

6.3 'Image Consciousness' and Glasgow 1990

In accordance with Resolution Cult 64, Glasgow District Council and Strathclyde Regional Council were charged with the responsibility of organising and financing the event. With respect to the latter, a great variety of estimates of expenditure on the event have been circulated. The final accounts suggest that just over £52.5 million was spent directly on City of Culture events. The largest single contribution came from Glasgow District Council. On top of the £20 million they normally spent on culture, the District Council added a further £15 million. This represented approximately 5.5% of the District's total expenditure during 1990.

Other major contributions came from Strathclyde Regional Council (£12 million), Central Government via the Office of Arts and Libraries (£500,000), and the European Community (£500,000). A further £4.5 million was raised through private sponsorship, around 7% of which was 'in kind' (all financial information supplied by Colin James of Glasgow District Council and Ian Waterston of Strathclyde Regional Council - see Appendix 1).

With respect to the organisation of the event, Strathclyde Regional Council employed a small staff to discharge its cultural fund during 1990. Nevertheless, the organisation of the City of Culture event was primarily left to Glasgow District Council. In preparation for the 1988 Garden Festival, Glasgow District Council established a

Festivals Office in early 1987. This office was given 'committee' status - that is was treated as equivalent to say, the Economic Development and Employment Committee. Following the Garden Festival, the Festivals Office was given the task of organising the City of Culture event.

The Festivals Office operated in two main ways. First, it was responsible for evaluating applications from local groups for City of Culture funds. Second, it was active in conceiving and implementing events itself - mainly the bigger ones involving international performers. Working in this dual role, the Festivals Office liaised with over 550 cultural organisations across the city. Unquestionably, it proved in the end to be the chief architect of the 1990 programme.

At the start of the year, a target of 1500 individual events was set. This was quickly exceeded and by the end of the year, the Festivals Office claimed that over 3800 City of Culture events had taken place. For the first time in the history of the concept, at least one City of Culture event had been celebrated on each of the 365 days of the year.

Aside from its organising duties, the Festivals Office was also responsible for promoting the event. That Glasgow 1990 was to form part of the wider place marketing programme can be seen in the extent to which the Festivals Office engaged in promotion. In October 1989, the Festivals Office set up a special Press Office. This was to handle

all enquiries made by local, national and international journalists, and to ensure that information on the event was disseminated as widely as possible. The office was headed by Jill Campbell McKay, a former Director of the P.R. section of Andrew Lloyd Weber's, *Really Useful Theatre Company* in London.

Some sense of the marketing orientation of the event can be gained through an, albeit simplistic, reflection upon the distribution of Glasgow District Council's City of Culture fund. The first point to note is that aside from the extra £15 million spent specifically as a consequence of the event (the Special Fund), and the £1.2 million that the Greater Glasgow Tourist Board received in 1990 from the Economic Development and Employment Committee anyway, some £2 million was spent by the Council on additional promotional campaigns. Much of this was channelled through the Tourist Office. It went on marketing campaigns such as at the Expo Osaka exhibition in Japan, Christkindels in Nuremberg, the Icelandic Trade Fair, Gateshead Garden Festival, and the Lord Mayor of London's Parade. Further, in an unprecedented step, the Council hired London based Public Relations consultants Saatchi and Saatchi to promote the event both within the UK and abroad. The total cost of this campaign was a further £2 million.

In addition, if one turns attention towards the £15 million spent directly on cultural activities, the marketing basis of many of the larger events is not

difficult to see. The Glasgow's Glasgow exhibition, tracing out the city's 800 year history, was self-consciously a tourist oriented attraction. It cost, in the end, an estimated £4.5 million. Moreover, events such as the Big Day, a major rock and pop event broadcast live to over eleven countries by Channel 4 (£1.1 million), and visits by the Bolshoi Opera (£1 million) and Frank Sinatra (£700,000), also consumed major proportions of the overall budget.

If one assumes that these events were run with primarily P.R. objectives in mind, it is evident that of the £15 million Special Fund set aside, almost half went on only four major promotional events. Further, if the additional £4 million spent on the marketing of the event is included, it is apparent that of the £19 million spent by the Glasgow District over and above their normal cultural contributions, over £11 million went directly upon place marketing activities.

The significance of this figure is realised when it is understood that during 1990, the Economic Development and Employment Committee's total budget (including promotional, tourist and environmental expenditure - that is place marketing activity in any case), amounted to just over £5.8 million (Glasgow District Council 1991a). That transforming Glasgow at an aesthetic level for the purposes of economic regeneration was a major objective of the District Council during 1990 is unquestionable.

6.4 Official accounts of the City of Culture event: references to economic regeneration

In examining the links which officials made between the City of Culture event and Glasgow's economic regeneration, it is useful to begin by giving some general examples of accounts in which the primacy of the economic logic is upheld. In a field interview with Sam Warnock, the response given to the question, 'What do you regard as being the most important aim of Glasgow 1990?', illustrated a significant concern with economic regeneration;

'I would say that the bottom line is the advancement of the economic redevelopment of the city. You always have to look after the economic side of the city. If a city has no economy it goes down the tubes...Nineteen ninety is just one of the many threads that the Council is using to regenerate the city and in the 1990 case what we're doing is we're using culture and there's nothing wrong with that and there's nothing new in that either.'

(Sam Warnock Fieldwork Interview 6/9/90)

Regenerating Glasgow's economy was the central goal according to Warnock, as the very existence of the city was dependent upon a strong economic base. Pursuing this line of reasoning in a field interview with Jill Campbell McKay, McKay was asked if improving Glasgow's economy was the 'key to understanding the way the Council had approached the event'. She replied;

'Well anyone that tells you otherwise is either telling porkies or is just plain politically naive. Of course this is an economic driven event, square bang within everything else the city has been doing recently to improve the situation. I mean, I personally am very conscious, and am

constantly reminded by the high heid ones, that I am here to sell an event to tourists. I mean, that is a real pressure and I see myself as always being judged against that fact.. ..So yes this is much more than just a cultural jamboree.'

(Jill Campbell McKay Fieldwork Interview 11/9/90)

It is significant that McKay states that she was 'very conscious' of pressure from leading council officials ('the high heid ones') that marketing the city to tourists was what her performance would be judged against. Further, to think of the event in terms other than economic regeneration was defined as 'politically naive'. The event was said to be 'more than just a cultural jamboree'.

Perhaps the most significant statements made during 1990 within the language of economic regeneration however, came from Council Leader Pat Lally, in an article published in the Glasgow Herald in June 30th 1990 (Lally 1990a). This article was written in response to a number of criticisms of the event which were in circulation. Defending the Council, Lally, in a passage which was to be quoted many times later by critics, defined the Council's approach as follows;

'It is the intention of the City Council and our colleagues on Strathclyde Region that we are going to use the title to the maximum advantage - we are going to *milk* it for all it is worth. We are using the title to open up employment opportunities, in cultural industries and in tourism. We have succeeded in attracting £2 billion worth of investment to Glasgow; we need more and 1990 will help us get it.' (Italics added)

(Pat Lally 1990a p6)

In the midst of fresh criticism derived from this article, Lally, in a letter to the New Statesman and Society on September 7th 1990, continued to insist upon the centrality of the economic logic. Retaining the idea that the event was to be 'milked' for economic purposes, Lally argued;

'We make no apology for *milking* 1990 in the interests of our people, for all the development and investment that we can: to fail to do so would be turn our backs on a golden opportunity.' (Italics added)

(Pat Lally 1990b p22)

For Lally then, the City of Culture event represented a 'golden opportunity' to attract 'development and investment'. This was defined as being in the 'interests of our people'.

Extensions to this basic argument came in two parts. First, officials tried to embed the economic potential of the event within the context of Glasgow's movement towards a post-industrial economy. References were made throughout 1990 to the fact that Glasgow stood at the 'hinges' of a period of transition of historical significance. Second, the role of 1990 therein, was defined to be that of catalyst of change. The City of Culture event was to 'grease the wheels of change'.

In examining the first part of the argument, the following four quotes from Pat Lally, Sam Warnock, Bob Palmer, and the Festivals Office in general, offer insight into the type of thinking which was structuring debate:

'History shows us that a city not in the rise is in decline. Glasgow has been in turn an agricultural centre, a tobacco trading port, a textiles and then heavy engineering complex, and the Second City of the British Empire. Now we are facing the 21st century, and a new technological age. With telecommunications improving and leisure time increasing, the prosperity of the future will be based upon service industries, including financial services, administration, leisure and tourism.'

(Pat Lally 1990a p6)

'What we're really trying to do is to bring Glasgow to what has been called Europe's first post-industrial city. The city that previously was based on...shipbuilding and on heavy engineering, and in building locomotives, all of which fell away, and now we're changing into the finance sector, into high technology, and into the service industries such as tourism and tourism provision which incorporates all the things like hotels, bars, clubs and things for tourists to do. Its really just like all other cities but, well, just as in the past, we're just one or two steps ahead of everybody else.'

(Sam Warnock Fieldwork Interview 6/9/90)

'Well from my point of view you can't look backwards, you really have to look forwards. You've got to look at the changing base of Glasgow's industries. I mean Glasgow is, or is hoping to become a post-industrial city. That's a very complicated notion because you then have to create a whole new base for employment. You can't live in the hope that those old days will return again, where thirteen ships a day will be built on the Clyde and steam locomotives will continue to emerge from locomotive works in Springburn. That is in the past and you have to think of the present and the future.'

(Bob Palmer Third Ear Radio 3 3/10/90)

'You can't stand still; you can't rely on the achievements of the past, no matter how impressive these may have been....Glasgow's days as a great industrial city are over. Sad as this may seem, its consequences are clear: set out to become a great post-industrial city. Glasgow's post-industrial future will stem in large part from its civic heritage and cultural wealth..... With Glasgow perceived as a great City of Culture, we can

expect arts related tourism to grow, and with that comes jobs.'

(Festivals Office 1990 p20)

All four quotes talk of epochal changes in Glasgow's economic base, characterised by a new emphasis on high technology service industries, financial services, tourism and leisure activities. The days of heavy engineering and a strong industrial base are talked about as being 'part of the past', never again to return. Significantly, Glasgow is seen in Warnock's comments as being at the forefront of the transition towards a service economy. The aim of the City of Culture event Warnock suggests, is to bring Glasgow the title 'Europe's first post-industrial city'.

The second part of this argument involved specifying precisely how the City of Culture event could contribute to this turn towards the service industries. If the Year of Culture event was approached as a economic tool to be used in Glasgow's attempts to forge for itself a post-industrial future, the question which officials had to answer was, precisely *how* could the event be of assistance. Answers to this question have been touched upon in the above quotes. Nevertheless, what is important here, is that officials were called upon during the year to make connections *explicit*.

A first explanation can be seen in the frequent references which were made to the importance of the Cultural Industries. It has already been pointed out that 'culture as an industry'

emerged towards the latter half of the 1980s as an important area in which the Council's Economic Development and Employment Committee was active. This thinking carried over into 1990 and references were made to the number of people who could be employed directly in the cultural projects which were undertaken during the year.

Significant in this regard was John Myerscough's (1988) study on the economic importance of the arts in Glasgow. This study was frequently drawn upon by officials as a means of legitimating the claim that the City of Culture event itself, could provide substantial levels of employment. Neil Wallace, for instance, in a radio interview on Clyde 1, - defending the event against callers to the programme who questioned the economic benefits the event would bring, argued;

'That is absolutely not true and we've got independent, objective research to prove it to be the case...The Policy Studies Institute [where Myerscough was based at that time] published a study last year which is an extraordinary piece of impact reporting in the depths that it reached, established that there are something like 8,000 people working full time in the cultural sector in Glasgow. They create another 6,500 jobs indirectly, amounting to £100 million pounds worth of investment... One of the main justifications for the event therefore, is that the Cultural Industries have emerged as one of the new industries if you like, pulling Glasgow out of the depths of post-industrial crises.'

(Neil Wallace Talk in Sunday Radio Clyde 1 2/7/89)

Whilst references to the Cultural Industries were important, perhaps the most significant way in which links with the event and Glasgow's economy were made during 1990 however, was through reference to the city's

image. Through the City of Culture event, outsiders might come to see Glasgow in a different light. This change in perception might then have economic implications. In this sense, the event was seen as the latest tactic to be used in the wider image building programme which had been undertaken throughout the 1980s. In an interview on Radio 4, former Lord Provost Michael Kelly, who had launched the 'Glasgow's miles better' campaign in the early 1980s, pointed out;

'I've always seen the purpose of this year as continuing the progress of the Miles Better Campaign and of the Garden Festival, in contributing to Glasgow's economic regeneration.'

(Michael Kelly Today Radio 4 12/5/90)

A pervasive feature of official statements made during 1990, was the belief that Glasgow not only had to improve its image, but had to reverse existing negative ones. As was pointed out in chapter 4, this reflects the two sided nature of the 'image consciousness' which exists in Glasgow. It was widely accepted that Glasgow was poorly regarded by outsiders. Neil Wallace, for example, in a live interview on Radio Scotland, was asked if the event was needed to overcome a number of negative stereotypes Glasgow suffered from. He replied;

'Well that's absolutely true because as Harry Diamond, the present Director of Public Relations, once said, this is the least understood city in the world and it has to be explained to the world. You see, nobody has much idea as to the cultural riches of the city and I do believe that one obligation of 1990 must absolutely be to disprove once and for all the myths with which Glasgow and its communities

have had to live for many years.'

(Neil Wallace Tuesday Review Radio Scotland 2/1/90)

Jill Campbell McKay, likewise, in a description of what her job involved, pointed out;

'My job is to surprise people. I want people who, for whatever reason, have developed a complex about Glasgow to think of the city in a new light after 1990...Convincing people that Glasgow is not all about nutcases and slums and freezing weather is what I'm paid to do.'

(Jill Campbell McKay Fieldwork Interview 11/9/90)

Reversing negative images of the city therefore, was defined by officials as a key objective of the City of Culture event. Having made connections between the event and image building, it was left to officials to justify precisely how a new image could stimulate economic recovery. Three lines of argument, two of which have been implicit in what has been said to this point, were frequently used.

First, an improved image, especially focussed around the notion of Glasgow as a 'Cultural City', would help attract tourists to the city. Aside from normal tourist flow, particular attention was given to the idea that the 'Cultural Feel' would bring conferences to Glasgow. The conference market was seen as particularly lucrative, and one that Glasgow was well positioned to penetrate. Making such links between the City of Culture event and tourism, and illustrating once more the belief that Glasgow has suffered from negative stereotypes, Eddie Friel (Director of the Greater Glasgow Tourist Board), argued in

an interview on Radio Scotland;

'The importance of Glasgow 1990 is that it delivers Glasgow to an external international audience and kills off once and for all the idea of Glasgow as an industrial slum. That must be absolutely the most important thing; that we are now very much on the tourist map as a consequence of everything that has been going on here over the past seven years [since the 1983 Welcome Home campaign]. The real success has been in things like our convention marketing where we've earned something like £56 million pounds worth of conference business over the past two years. In addition, the whole cultural tourism drive has delivered high occupancy in the summer months and people now see Glasgow as a major European destination.'

(Eddie Friel Good Morning Scotland Radio Scotland 3/8/90)

Second, links were also made between an improved image and the attraction of inward investment. The event would first of all put Glasgow on the 'investment map'. Moreover, it would make relocation decisions easier since key personnel who might otherwise have refused to relocate to the city could now be persuaded more easily. It was also for this reason that attracting conferences to Glasgow was deemed to be particularly important. Conferences generally involve people in positions of authority. If they could be introduced to Glasgow through a conference, perhaps they might see the city in a different light when making investment decisions, or considering taking up a post in the city. Michael Kelly, in an interview on Radio 4 in which the economic potential of the event was being discussed, pointed out;

'I think that people refused to come and live in Glasgow, refused to invest in Glasgow, and key personnel refused to come because of the appalling image the city had. That image was inaccurate, but the cultural life available has increased even more dramatically since and

people are seeing Glasgow as the most exciting city in the United Kingdom and by the end of this year they're going to be even more excited by it. The feedback is that more personnel will be willing to move to Glasgow and more investment in terms of relocations and expansions will be made....The image of a city is extremely important in terms of attracting investment.'

(Michael Kelly Today Radio 4 12/5/90)

Finally, Sam Warnock offered an account of the economic implications of the new image which, whilst not found elsewhere, represented an interesting alternative.

Warnock suggested that the 'cultural feel' which the event would generate would encourage private house construction. Since leisure and cultural amenity had an influence on housing prices (inflating them), Glasgow's programme of reaestheticisation would entice construction companies to invest in new housing developments. This in itself would be important in providing construction jobs. In addition, it would have the knock-on effect of reintroducing the professional classes back into the city. This would in turn give the city a broader and thus more attractive labour market, which would have further implications for future investment decisions:

'It's a well known fact that the yuppies like living in places with a stylish reputation, a trendy place, full of things to do, especially cultural things. Now if the demand is there, housing companies will build, and they have down at the Broomielaw and Princes Dock...and as they build so the yuppies move in...The thing is that because of this, the image of the deprived inner city resident goes out the window and firms start to say, hold it a minute, I can get a Systems Analyst in there [the City Centre], I can get my Financial Consultant and what not. It changes the perceptions firms have of the type of workers that Glasgow has.'

(Sam Warnock Fieldwork Interview 6/9/90)

6.5 Summary

An effort has been made in this chapter to demonstrate that Glasgow's role as European city of Culture 1990 was appropriated by officials as part of wider efforts to market the city by attending to its aesthetic qualities. Glasgow's image consciousness was prevalent in the organisation of the event both in terms of the marketing campaigns which surrounded it (the £2 million paid to Saatchi and Saatchi being the paradigm example), and in terms of the distribution of the 1990 fund. It was suggested that almost half of the £15 million Special Fund went on only four events which were primarily geared towards the promotion of the city.

Through an examination of official accounts of the event, it was shown that the terms of reference within which officials justified the event, in public, was similarly rooted in the language of regeneration. The event was at base a vehicle to be used in the city's economic regeneration. Glasgow was sitting at the hinges of a period of transition which had historical significance.

From its industrial past, the city was looking forward to a 'post-industrial future'. The City of Culture event would help Glasgow earn the title 'Europe's first post-industrial city'. It would do this by overturning negative images of the city. This would in turn bring tourists, investors, key personnel, construction companies, and the professional classes, back into the city. More directly,

by boosting the Cultural Industries, the event would offer direct employment opportunities.

CHAPTER 7 - 'WHOSE CULTURE?'

7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to examine some of the criticisms of the cultural substance of the City of Culture event which were in circulation in Glasgow during 1990. These criticisms were rooted in the idea that the type of 'culture' celebrated through the event, did not accurately reflect Glasgow's 'real' cultural traditions. The topic of debate then was; 'whose culture' *is* being celebrated during 1990?

Whilst a number of themes emerge from these debates, attention herein will be given to three in particular. First, 'culture' was frequently defined during 1990 in terms of 'high and sacred' works of *art*. The City of Culture event was, as a consequence, suggested to be failing to cater for the tastes of the local working classes which were regarded as being somewhat basic. The way this debate worked itself into newspaper coverage (section 7.3), and local discussion (sections 7.4 and 7.5) will be considered.

Second, turning to the argument put forward by the Workers City group, attention will be given in sections 7.6 and 7.7, to a debate which focussed upon the political and moral content of cultural activities. The City of Culture 'culture' in this case, was talked about as being driven

by business interests. The consequence was that the city's radical socialist cultural traditions were being systematically excluded. Finally, a brief reflection upon the gender connotations built into the event will be provided in section 7.8.

7.2 Information sources

In writing the chapter, four sources of material have been drawn upon. First, some reflections in the national media on Glasgow's role as European City of Culture are considered. In particular, a number of cartoons on the event are examined. These are drawn from the media library generated in the course of doing fieldwork at the Festivals Office. Cartoons might seem overly trivial to be called 'data'. I would follow Jackson (1989) however, in suggesting that cartoons and jokes are important in that they function to reproduce certain belief systems at grass roots level. Further, they provide a useful route into understanding a particular community since they often 'catch' a particular sentiment or twist of logic which would be difficult to grasp through straightforward discussion.

Second, a television programme from the 'comic' Rab C. Nesbitt series has been used. This series, broadcast nationally on BBC 2 in 1990, was watched by an average of three million viewers. The main character, Rab C. Nesbitt, is portrayed as a caricature of the typical working class Glaswegian. Each programme in the series revolved around

a political issue of contemporary importance in Glasgow. The European City of Culture event provided the focus for one. This programme examined the meaning of the event to ordinary working class Glaswegians. As such, it provides a rich insight into the type of ideas which were 'shared' by the Glasgow community during 1990.

Third, four of the group interviews which were undertaken are used. It has already been pointed out (in chapter 5) that three groups who were not involved in Glasgow 1990 were interviewed. The primary reason for doing this was to gain further insight into the debates on the cultural substance of the event that were being found elsewhere. In an effort to achieve a polarity of opinions, a group of (manual) railway workers were chosen in the hope that they might take up the 'working class' side of the argument. Civil Servants, in contrast, were interviewed with a view to clarifying arguments in favour of the event. A group of school children were also interviewed. Whilst of relevance here, the rationale for this interview lies outwith the present context.

In the end however, all three groups emerged as critical of the cultural substance of the event. Further, some of the groups who took part in the event and who were interviewed, also developed critical positions. One group in particular, called 'The Cult' (see Appendix 1), used arguments which almost exactly overlapped those drawn upon in the other three interviews. This group, along with the

above three was, therefore, used in the compilation of the chapter.

Finally, a great variety of sources are used in drawing together the two sections on the Workers City group. The main sources of material on the group in general have already been outlined in chapter 5. For further information on the material used in *this chapter*, reference should be made to chapter 5.

7.3 Glasgow - a City of Culture ?

A common reaction in the national media to Glasgow's award of the European City of Culture title was one of surprise. In an article in the Daily Telegraph at the start of the year, Martin Gayford noted;

'Eyebrows were raised when Glasgow was first selected as European City of Culture. Glasgow ? Culture ? The two didn't seem to go together - wouldn't it have been better to have chosen Bath or Oxford?'

(Martin Gayford Daily Telegraph January 6th 1990 p21)

Tom Lynch of the Financial Times also drew attention to this line of thinking;

'When Glasgow was selected as Europe's City of Culture for 1990 - in competition with, among other places, Edinburgh, there was general amusement and disbelief among those unable to associate Glasgow with anything other than grimy tenements, derelict shipyards, and violence ridden streets.'

(Tom Lynch Financial Times May 21 1990 p6)

Notice that in Lynch's comments, some of the image problems that were identified in chapter 4 appear. In particular, the industrial decline of the city and its reputation for violence are cited. These are suggested to be images which sit uncomfortably with the notion of a 'Cultural City' - hence the amusement and disbelief at Glasgow's selection. In an article in the Catalyst magazine, Noreen Taylor uses a similar line of argument. Noting that people in London were 'shocked' when Glasgow won the award, Taylor pointed out that in London, Glasgow has historically been regarded as;

'the city of mean streets and mean people, razor gangs, the Gorbals slums, of smoke, grime and fog, of drunks, impenetrable accents and communists.'

(Noreen Taylor Catalyst 3 1990 p2)

Again, observe the salience of images of a run down, gang infested, Left Wing city. Once more, such images are contrasted with the idea of 'culture' and the incomprehension of Glasgow's choice noted.

Precisely *why* such images do not sit well with the concept of culture is not immediately clear. Evidently, the answer is bound up with certain definitions of 'culture'. In the case of Glasgow as a run down, 'grimy' city, perhaps the word 'culture' is used in the sense of the 'vibrant' on the one hand, and the 'beautiful' on the other. To be 'cultural', one might have to be 'alive', creative', and 'imaginative'. A city in decline would clearly not meet such criteria. Further, words such as 'dirty', 'grimy', and 'industrial', do not match

with the notion of culture as a celebration of that which is 'beautiful' and 'elegant'. These remain somewhat speculative observations however.

The idea that Glasgow could be thought of as a City of Culture was also made a source of humour. It is instructive to look at a number of cartoons which appeared in the national press to this end. By questioning the source of humour in these cartoons, further definitions of 'culture' can be found.

A fairly complicated cartoon, taken from the Mail on Sunday, is shown in Figure 7.1. The scene involves a number of characters outside a pub with a rough looking tramp approaching a 'respectable' middle aged couple for money. The man's bow tie, spectacles, and beret, suggest foreign or middle class associations. This is reinforced by the formality of the female's style of dress.

A number of aspects of working class Glasgow appear in the cartoon. First, the two men brawling outside the pub, one head butting the other, carries the image of Glasgow as a violent city. The graffiti on the right hand door of the pub announcing 'Tongs Ya Bass', is illuminating. This was a phrase used during the thirties in Glasgow (the era in which the book 'No Mean City' is situated - see chapter 4) in the context of gang warfare in the East End of the city. The Tongs were a particular gang, and Tongs Ya Bass (meaning bastard), their battle cry.

Figure 7.1 Glasgow: European City of Culture: A joke surely?



Hey Jimmy! Can ye spare a fiver for a wee drop of Chateau Latour '59?"

Mail on Sunday 7/1/90

Secondly, situated outside a working class pub, 'The Loose Sporran', with people carrying pints and bottles, and set against a background of broken bottles piled up in rubbish heaps, the characteristic of the alcoholic Glaswegian living in slum conditions also appears.

A number of other aspects of the leisure activities of working class Glasgow appear on the billing posters affixed to the wall on the extreme left of the cartoon. Adverts for Chic Murray, and Harry Lauder, well known local entertainers of the past, a Jim Watt fight (ex. world boxing champion), and for the 'Glasgow Empire' (a venue popularly acclaimed for its commitment to popular culture) all appear. There is also a poster for a Rangers-Celtic football match. There is intense rivalry between these two teams which is founded on the city's Protestant/Catholic divide. The image of Glasgow as a religiously divided city therefore, is another aspect of the cartoon.

These stereotypes of working class Glasgow are contrasted with the City of Culture event. Indeed, in the case of the billings, there would appear to be an attempt to suggest that the event is trying to *write over* the city's 'traditional' culture. The size of the poster advertising the event, and its appearance as the latest addition, conveys the impression that an attempt was being made during 1990 to overlay a new cultural genre upon an older one. Indeed, the layering effect invokes a sense of temporality. The fact that multiple 'layers' lie under the

City of Culture advert suggests that the new genre is somewhat superficial. A 'dense' culture exists beneath the surface appearance.

The confrontation between the tramp and the tourists is also illuminating. The tourists appear to have wandered by mistake into a part of Glasgow which they did not expect to find. Indeed, they look quite disturbed at coming into contact with this side of life in the city. It might be suggested that they had come to Glasgow in search of a 'Cultural City' but instead had come into contact with something more 'primitive' and 'vulgar'.

The caption accompanying the cartoon is spoken by the tramp. Calling for the attention of the tourists with the phrase 'Hey Jimmy', he is shown to have adapted his act to accommodate the new circumstances. Instead of asking for money for 'Buckie' (meaning cheap Buckfast wine), the character asks for a 'fiver' for vintage champagne. It is this adaptation that lies at the heart of the joke. The event, instead of being approached as a cultural celebration, is put to functional use by the tramp in the course of begging for money. The embrace of culture was superficial.

Central to the cartoon then, is an image of working class Glasgow as somewhat basic and perhaps even 'primitive'. Glasgow's is a culture of 'violence', 'drunkenness', 'religious conflict', 'boxing', 'football' etc. It is a place dominated by slum conditions; broken bottles, broken windows

and rough working men's pubs. Against this backdrop, 'culture' would appear to be something more 'refined'. The aesthetic preferences of the tourists, coming to see the City of Culture event, are perhaps more 'cultivated' and 'sophisticated'. Their discomfort and disorientation would appear to derive from their encounter with a side of the city the marketeers had omitted to tell them about. The dichotomy between high and working class culture would appear to underpin the cartoon therefore.

In trying to come to terms with the 'surprise' which accompanied Glasgow's award of the title then, reference has to be made to the way culture was being defined as involving an 'acquired taste', or 'higher forms of life'. To be 'cultured', one would have to demonstrate an ability to appreciate the finer things in life. Glasgow's working classes, showing characteristics of more 'basic' forms of life, 'primitive', 'uncouth', and somewhat 'vulgar', evidently lacks 'culture'. As such, the City of Culture event sits as an almost artificial creation. It defies the reality.

This distinction between high and working class culture also appeared in other cartoons published during the year. The theme running through Figure's 7.2 to 7.5, is that of the Glaswegian's lack of ability to appreciate culture. In Figure 7.2, three elderly working class women, with headscarfs and shopping bags, form the main background. The joke works via the inability of the woman's 'man', to identify the

Figure 7.2



"When I telt her me and ma man got tickets fur Pavarotti fur £120, she asked if that was fur a fortnight."

Sunday Post 27/5/90

Figure 7.3



"I prefer Placido Domingo maself - he's mair like Sydney Devine .."

Daily Record 16/5/90

Figure 7.4



"Ah wanted tae go tae Pavarotti, an' he wanted tae go tae Sinatra, so we're compromisin' an' playin' a Sydney Devine tape".

Evening Times 8/5/90

Figure 7.5



"Ma Jason got nicked fur daein' graffiti better than that"

Evening Times 19/4/90

significance of the name Pavarotti. This cartoon was published in late May 1990, around the time of Pavarotti's visit to the city. Instead of understanding that Pavarotti was a world renowned tenor, the woman's 'man' thought that 'it' was a holiday resort.

Figures 7.3 and 7.4 also focus upon the Pavarotti visit. Once again, working class women are depicted. The women on this occasion are less elderly and perhaps more outlandish in their sense of dress, footwear and hairstyles (although note again that a headscarf is worn by one woman). From Figure 7.3 in particular, one gets the impression of the 'bimbo' image, or as they are known locally, 'Hairy Mary's'. The joke in both cases is generated around the comparisons made by the women between local Country and Western singer Sydney Devine, the tenors Pavarotti and Placido Domingo, and Frank Sinatra (who also appeared as part of the 1990 celebrations). Devine is constantly taunted in Glasgow for his supposed lack of ability to sing.

In Figure 7.3, the women decide upon the relative merits of Pavarotti and Domingo, on the basis of how alike they are to Sydney Devine. In Figure 7.4, similarly, rival preferences for Pavarotti and Sinatra are resolved when both sides agree to 'play a Sydney Devine tape' instead. The inability of the women to grade the different performers is the key to both jokes and alludes to a basic lack of knowledge vis-à-vis what constitutes superior quality.

In Figure 7.5, again the focus is upon working class women.

On this occasion, two 'bimbos' (one again sporting a headscarf) discuss a painting in an art gallery. One woman points out that her son, 'got nicked for daein graffiti better than that'. The stereotype of the delinquent working class child vandalising property is used. Once more, the lack of ability of Glaswegians to appreciate culture is central to the joke.

From a consideration of media commentary on the year therefore, it can be seen that one strand of thought which emerged during 1990 was that it was a 'joke' to think of Glasgow as a Cultural City. This strand was based upon a definition of culture as something involving 'higher' and more 'sophisticated' forms of artistic appreciation. A number of stereotypes of working class Glasgow were drawn upon to suggest that such a level of appreciation was absent in the city. Glasgow's working classes had more basic and primitive tastes.

7.4 Responses in Glasgow : 'laughing at ourselves'

If the national media was disputing Glasgow's right to proclaim itself a City of Culture, it might be asked; how did locals themselves participate in the debate? In the first instance, it has to be acknowledged that despite presenting an unflattering image of themselves, there was a tendency, in some contexts, for locals to accept the mantle of 'primitive' and to turn their lack of

appreciation of 'culture' into something of personal amusement. Unlike the cartoons, where commentators appeared to be making a joke at the expense of Glaswegians, in this instance it was a case of Glaswegians laughing at themselves.

One of the most common manifestations of this during the year was the tendency among locals to spell the word culture with a capital K. Culture became 'Kulture'. In speech, this was denoted by an emphasis upon the letter K. To say 'Kulture' in public was to play along with the larger joke of the unsophisticated Glaswegian.

This use of humour 'within the Glaswegian community' can be seen most clearly in the Rab C. Nesbitt programme on the City of Culture event. As noted above, Rab C. Nesbitt, the main character, represents a caricature of the working class Glaswegian. Wearing a string vest, second hand suit, and sporting a bandage permanently strapped around his head, Nesbitt, from Govan (a working class area of the city near the old docklands), is represented as work shy, a tax evader, and fond of alcohol. Further, violence is central to his lifestyle. Throughout the series, humour is generated around the personal relationship he develops with the Local Magistrate.

Described in this way, Nesbitt can be seen to be the enemy of 'high culture'. His tastes are primitive and he evidently lacks the sensitivity and intelligence to appreciate higher forms of life. And as in the above

examples, this is played on as a means of generating humour. In one scene for instance, Nesbitt is shown examining paintings in an art shop window. Scrutinising the paintings, he proclaims;

'Culture is it? Don't talk to me. See me ? See culture ? See thon ? [pointing to paintings in an art shop window] Yi can shove it, they're y'are. I mean don't get me wrang. I revere mankind's highest achievements, I'm nae wallapur, know ? But I mean, be fair, what's stuff like that got to do with keech like me, know ? I like real art ! I like punter art ! Something wae a wee taste of the old shite and onions to it, y'know.'

(Pattison 1990 p156-157)

Clearly, humour is generated here around Nesbitt's inability to appreciate works of art. That he considers real art to be that 'wae a wee taste of the old shite and onions to it' forms the centre of the joke. 'Mankind's highest achievements' are defined as having 'nothing to do' with 'keech' like himself.

Two further examples draw upon the same high culture/working class culture dichotomy. In a later scene, Nesbitt approaches a stall selling cheap paintings. The paintings he suggests, are 'functional'. Elaborating, he points out;

'See this keech here [pointing to the painting]. I mean, be honest, it's completely minging to look at. But it's just the job for hiding thon durty mark you get above the gas fire in the living room. Know ?'

(Pattison 1990 p157)

A Second example appears much later in the programme when Nesbitt decides to give 'culture' a chance and to visit

the Burrell Collection. This is a collection of artifacts from all over the world accrued by Glasgow shipbuilder William Burrell and rehoused by Glasgow District Council in 1983. It is renowned in the art world for its unique contribution. The following is a discussion Nesbitt (RCN) has with his friend Jamsie Cotter (JC) over this trip;

RCN 'where the hell is the Burrell Collection?'

JC 'I don't know, I thought you knew?'

RCN 'Is it licensed. Do they take bookies lines?'

JC 'No.'

RCN 'Well how the hell would I know? Use your noodle.'

(Pattison 1990 158-159)

In the Rab C. Nesbitt programme then, one sees an 'acceptance' of the notion that working class Glasgow lacked the ability to appreciate objects of high artistic merit. Instead of treating this as something to be concerned with however, it is developed into a joke. The tension created by the juxtaposition of working class Glasgow and higher forms of culture is released through humour. Glaswegians are called upon to refrain from taking the issue seriously and to learn to laugh at themselves.

7.5 Responses by Glaswegians : where is our culture ?

There emerged during 1990 nevertheless, arguments which were more defensive of Glasgow culture. To begin with, it is necessary to note that a pervasive feature of almost

all the interviews conducted during 1990, and certainly the four interviews identified above, was the claim that the City of Culture event had little relevance to the ordinary Glaswegian. Further, this seemed to be rooted in the belief that the event was concerned only with 'high' cultural events. The following quote catches the general theme which developed. The quote was offered up in the Civil Servants interview in the context of a discussion about 'how well' the event was 'going down' in Glasgow;

Interviewee 'I cheated a wee bit. I went out working on Monday, I've got nine staff underneath me now, and I pulled them all together and we talked a wee bit about this work, and I said City of Culture, what does that mean to you ? And they all just gave me Glacket stares. I said what's it done for you. Nothing. We get the occasional pop star who comes into the city, we'll maybe go and see them. But it meant nothing to the actual rank and file and that to me surely has to be your central concern.'

Interviewer 'You say that 1990 has nothing to do with the actual rank and file. Why do you think the rank and file have not been as interested as they were in the Garden Festival event that you pointed out earlier you thought was really successful.'

Interviewee 'Oh its difficult to say. I mean I suppose it's really the idea of 'culture' which really sticks in your gub. You know, it conjures up images of opera and ballet and orchestras and all that which you know I would say really is a put off for most people. Ih hi... so I mean I think the City of Culture has got lots of that sort of stuff in it.'

(Civil Servants Interview 14/11/90)

In this quote, it is suggested that a 'central concern', must be the fact that the City of Culture event had 'meant nothing to the actual rank and file' in the city.

Further, that the event meant nothing was suggested to be because of its connection with high culture. The City of

Culture event was said to have 'lots of opera and ballet' and 'that sort of stuff' in it. These were said to really 'stick in your gub'.

This observation then led to the claim that the event *should* have catered for ordinary Glaswegians. It is at this juncture that Glasgow began to be talked about as having its own 'culture'. In the above discussion, 'culture' was defined in such a way that it was suggested that Glasgow was 'cultureless'. And so arguments such as the following became commonplace;

1 'Opera and ballet have nothing to do with the culture of Glasgow.'

2 'No, but it's something that they are trying to introduce into the culture of Glasgow.'

1 'Aye aye, let's try and make them appreciate the culture of Venice or something. It's not the culture of Glasgow and that to me is what they should have been trying to highlight.'

(Civil Servants Interview 14/11/90).

In this quote, Glasgow's culture is positioned opposite such markers of 'high' culture as 'opera and ballet' and the 'culture of Venice'. High culture is talked about as being alien to the city and something that the council was trying to 'introduce'. Instead, the call was for a celebration of the city's indigenous culture.

It is at this juncture that problems emerged for proponents of this argument. As noted above, commentators both inside and outside the city were suggesting during

1990, that Glasgow's own culture was somewhat primitive, and that it was a 'joke' that the city was making pretensions to be a patron of high culture. By dismissing opera and ballet as having nothing to do with 'ordinary' Glaswegians, the appearance given was that the commentator's theories were being borne out in reality. The task facing people pursuing this line of argument therefore, was that of accounting for their rejection of opera and ballet in ways which did not leave them open to the accusation that they were unable to appreciate the finer things in life.

These observations open out a whole research area that remains to be investigated. The present discussion can touch on only a fraction of that area. Two lines of argument in particular will be examined here. First, in the group interviews, discussion centred around the authenticity of the motives of those people who take 'opera and ballet' seriously.

Whilst Glaswegians were suggested to be 'comfortable' with their lives, people who take 'high' culture seriously were said to be 'trying to prove something'. Perhaps such people had an inferiority complex. Someone had told them that holding a conversation on Mozart, or attending a Shakespeare play would make them look 'intelligent'. Their affiliation with high culture was fundamentally concerned with boosting their ego. Instead of being seen as a higher form of life therefore, culture was to be regarded as the

domain of 'pretentious', 'insecure' folk, trying to boost their image.

The following quotes, taken from the interviews with the Civil Servants and Railwaymen, are interesting in this regard:

'I don't think anybody actually enjoys going to the opera really. They just do it because they think it makes them look good. You know, look at me everyone. I went to the Citz [Citizen Theatre] last night to see this or that great play...big bloody deal... what these people don't understand is, we're all sitting there saying, oh aye, that's great, and laughing at them behind their backs.'

(Civil Servants Interview 14/11/90)

'I went out with a guy one time... and he took me to see this great picture [said in a sarcastic voice]. It was totally in Hungarian or something and I was bored out of my skull all night...[after the film] we ended up going to Nico's [a trendy wine bar] and met up with his pals who were all the yuppie types you know, smart dressed, I know what's happening. Anyway, he starts saying how moved he was at this and that bit of the film and they were all nodding...and they were trying to act really intellectual and they were being really loud so everyone could hear them. I ended up feeling right out of it and I just thought what a bunch of dickheads, you know ego-maniacs.'

(Civil Servants Interview 14/11/90)

'Our section went out to a Karaoki a couple of weeks back and there's this guy [in the section] who thinks he's great. He goes down to Leeds and Birmingham just for a night out at the Ballet and he's always first to pick you up if you don't say a word properly, that type of guy...We all went up to do a number and we tried to get him to join in. And he kept going, you's lot are making an arse of yourselves you know, don't embarrass me...You know. he was so bothered with his image he couldn't let his hair down.'

(Civil Servants Interview 14/11/90)

'See the thing is, when we go down the local or whatever, we go out to enjoy ourselves. We're not interested in

posing about, worrying about what other folk think of us. ...We just get stuck in about it...But the folk who go to art galleries and things are always trying to beat each other. You know, they're not going because they like paintings or that. They want to improve [emphasised] themselves, or at least make sure that other people see them there.'

(Railwaymen Interview 10/10/90)

In these quotes, one sees the motives of people attending 'high' cultural events being questioned. People attending such events are said to be 'ego-maniacs', more concerned with being seen at an event than taking satisfaction from the performance itself. Their motives are not genuine.

In this way, the status of Glasgow's culture could be defended against those who suggested that it was inferior to higher and more elitist forms. Such people are preoccupied with their image. They follow the rules and rigidities set down by high culture in a bid to make themselves look good. Glasgow's culture is at least authentic. People in Glasgow do things because they *want* to, not because they want to be *seen* to.

A second line of argument focussed upon the standards which are used to define what type of 'culture' is superior. In this case, the question posed was 'who says' Glasgow's culture is inferior to 'opera and ballet'? It is interesting to consider the interviews undertaken with 'The Cult' group and the school children to this end. In these interviews, reference was made to the fact that the standards often used to judge the rival merits of works of art are somewhat artificial. This point was turned

into some fairly humorous accounts:

'I remember seeing this thing on Game for a Laugh where they set up this group of artists who thought they knew everything. They got some children to cycle BMX's over this big piece of paper; they had put all different colours on the tyres. Anyway the thing was a disaster looking... and then they put it up in some famous show [exhibition] and these people came in and they were talking for ages about it saying oh look at this bit the painter was meaning this thing... You know, and it was a right red neck when the guy told them how the thing was made.'

(The Cult 10/11/90)

'This guy in America was fed up with doing paintings and getting all these people kidding on that they were really intelligent and thinking really deep things about the paintings.. he got this monkey and just covered its fur in paint and let it loose...and everyone was going that's great, that's your best one yet [group laugh]. The thing he was trying to prove was that a lot of people just went along with him because they wanted to pretend that they knew lots about art and he was already quite famous.'

(Shawlands Academy 9/11/90)

The point made in both quotes was that the so-called 'experts' could not be trusted to set down the standards governing artistic good taste. If they endorsed paintings done by a monkey on the one hand, and school children on BMX bikes on the other, how could they occupy positions of authority when arbitrating over different cultures. The judgement of those people who might castigate Glasgow's indigenous culture as being somewhat primitive, was not to be trusted. It was not *necessarily* true that Glasgow's culture was inferior to others.

7.6 The Workers City critique : the *role* of culture in Glasgow

In the next two sections, attention turns to the criticism of the cultural substance of the event which Workers City and affiliated critics made. The City of Culture/our culture dichotomy was retained in this argument. More sophisticated accounts of what 'our culture' comprised however, and why it had failed to secure proper representation in the event, were developed.

Central to these accounts was the idea that culture ought to have a moral and political dimension. In this section, attention will focus on what the group meant by this, and the prescriptive statements they made regarding the type of culture that ought to have been celebrated during 1990. This will clear the way for an examination of the criticism of the event made therein (section 7.7).

In chapter 5, it was noted that Workers City was made up of various local writers, poets, and other artists. Explicit in the work of these people prior to 1990, was that cultural endeavour ought to reflect on questions of morality. The value of culture was considered to lie in its ability to provide minority groups with a means to a critical voice. This was a privilege which, especially throughout the 1980s, was considered to have been lost in other spheres of life (work especially). This made the cultural realm even more important. Culture therefore, was to function as a vehicle for the expression of dissent.

There was an historical dimension to this argument as it was mobilised in Glasgow during 1990. Reference was made by the group to the socialist traditions of Glasgow and in particular, to the events of the Red Clydeside era. This will become more evident below when the specific criticism of the 1990 event is outlined. It is worthwhile pointing out at this juncture however, that the back cover of the group's 1988 publication (McLay 1988a) included a photograph of 'Black Friday'. It will be recalled from chapter 3, that 'Black Friday' is the term given to the day in 1919 when police charged a strike demonstration in Glasgow over the length of the working week. This photograph is one small-symbol of the oral history of the era which survives in the city.

On the basis of this oral history, Glasgow's 'organic' culture it was argued, was rooted in the socialist traditions of the past. Freddy Anderson of Workers City, defined Glasgow's 'real' culture in the following terms;

'The real culture of Glasgow has existed not in the upper echelons but in the heart of Glasgow among the tenement dwellers. This culture created the bands to lead the unemployed during the Hunger Marches of the '30s. It lay in people like John MacLean and the Clydeside Workers Committee who defied the Glasgow and the London bosses in the fight against war and the exploitation of the poor. This is the real culture; though suppressed and hidden by the authorities, it survived underground and was orally transmitted from parents to children from the early nineteenth century in the Glasgow tenements.'

(Freddy Anderson 1990a p58-59)

Given that the city's real culture was defined as socialist,

and given the contemporary problems working class people face, it was argued that culture in 1990 ought to have been framing questions of morality from the point of view of the local working classes. The real culture of the city was one of radical Left Wing political critique.

Even a superficial examination of the literary and artistic works of members of the group illustrates this approach to culture *in practice*. The fictional work in the group's two major publications for instance, includes a story about the suicide of a young mother whose husband had left her with two children and whose claim for Social Security benefit had been turned down (Shephard 1988). In addition, Farquhar . McLay's (1990b) 'Working at it', dealing with a conversation between a long term unemployed man and a clerk at a Social Security office, Brendan McLaughlin's (1988) 'Life's a bowl a' cherries', in which an argument between a youth and a Middle Class commuter, over the former's presence in the First Class section of a train, is narrated, and Arnott and Mullan's (1988) send up of the Glasgow Garden Festival using dialogue from the BBC series The Beechgrove Garden, all exemplify the biting satire and use of black humour which members of the group often used when talking about localised instances of class conflict.

The writings of James Kelman, the unofficial leader of the group, represent some particularly sophisticated productions to derive from this view of culture. Kelman's book, *A Disaffection*, which was shortlisted for the Booker

Prize in 1989, is a good example (Kelman 1989). This novel examined the crises of conscience suffered by Glasgow teacher Patrick Doyle, as a consequence of his belief that the education system was a 'capitalist indoctrination machine'. The angst he suffered was heightened by his disillusion with the university education he himself received.

That the general tone of this book is mirrored elsewhere in Kelman's work is undeniable. In an assessment of Kelman's career in the New York Review of Books, Gordon Craig summarises;

'The Glasgow that James Kelman writes about is the Glasgow of the unemployed and the ill employed...the many who feel betrayed but are not sure how or by whom. Their frustrations and dilemmas and tragedies he describes with a sympathy that is not devoid of grim humor, and in doing so he captures the tough, subtly nuanced language of the Glasgow working class.'

(Gordon Craig 1991a p14)

For Workers City then, the value of culture lay in its ability to provide the 'oppressed' with a means to a critical voice. Given that Glasgow's 'real' culture was considered to be a radical socialist one, handed down from the Red Clydeside era via a strong oral history, it was suggested that the City of Culture event ought to have been organised with the objective of providing Glasgow's working classes with a vehicle for highlighting the many problems they had to suffer.

7.7 The Workers City critique : the problem with the City of Culture event

It is within this context that the critique of the event was formulated. Two aspects of this critique need to be considered. First, the connection made by the group between the economic use to which the event was being put and the cultural implications of such usage. Second, their characterisation of what the event actually involved.

Regarding the first, the group consistently sought to highlight the fact that the event was being *used* by the District Council to sell Glasgow to tourists and private investors. In this, the group were simply calling attention to a position which the council was itself publicly promoting (chapter 6).

Farquhar McLay for instance, argued in the group's 1990 publication;

'the Year of Culture has more to do with power politics than culture. It has more to do with millionaire developers than art.'

(McLay 1990c p87)

James Kelman chose to draw attention to Pat Lally's comments to the effect that the event was to be 'milked' for economic regeneration (chapter 6). In an article in the 1990 publication, Kelman suggested that the very use of the word 'milked' gave vital clues as to the terms of reference within which the event was being approached. He argued;

'The architects of the adoption of the concept 'City of Culture' were politicians and entrepreneurs...Cash investment in the city and environs was the primary motivation, as the politicians have publicly confirmed. There is nothing wrong in that as far as their view of the 'real' world is concerned.'

(Kelman 1990d p131)

Similarly, both David Kemp and Sean Damer, critics affiliated to the Workers City group, were keen to make explicit the economic rationale for the event. Kemp, referring to the Glasgow's Glasgow exhibition, argued;

'By its decision to back an historical Disneyland in the arches beneath Central Station to the tune of £3.4 million, the city's Labour group has at last revealed its strategy for the Year of Culture. It is to be a Festival of Redevelopment....possibly the mistake too many of us made was to assume that the Year of Culture was actually to be about culture. It was of course to be the apotheosis of 'Glasgow's Miles Better'.'

(Kemp 1990 p4 and p9)

Sean Damer, on BBC 1's Focal Point documentary on 1990, pointed out;

'It is imperative to understand the context within which this event is being held. This is an event in which image makers are the power brokers....It is not a cultural event but really a greatly mistaken attempt by the City Fathers, and Mothers, to make Glasgow ripe for investors.'

(Sean Damer Focal Point BBC1 11/12/90)

Having drawn attention to the economic foundations of the event, the logic of the critique then turned towards the question of funding. Kelman's article in the 1990 publication represents the clearest statement in this context. The implications of using culture in this way, Kelman argued, was that judgements on the relative merit

of a particular work of art lay not in its contribution to moral debate (the perspective favoured by the group given its approach to culture), but upon its usefulness in selling the city and bringing about economic revival. The implication was that the criteria used to evaluate works of art were being defined by the business interests the event was designed to serve;

'What it comes down to is imposition, the imposition of external value on criteria that should be the province of art...What is at issue is value; the criteria by which we determine merit. In the world of the 'European City of Culture', a work of art is judged by the financial expediency of big business.'

(Kelman 1990d p128, p131).

This argument was extended in a live television discussion on Glasgow's politics in which Kelman and Pat Lally appeared (Night Flyte STV 4/7/91). On this programme, Kelman accused Lally of 'attacking the integrity and freedom of artists' by using the arts for economic regeneration purposes. What is important here is that the cultural content of the event was being suggested to be being *controlled* by the District Council. Given the use to which the event was being put, they were *active* in discriminating between various forms of culture.

Given that images of Glasgow as a *socialist* city were not helpful in efforts at attracting tourists and inward investment, funding for Glasgow's indigenous working class culture was being withdrawn in favour of a more *attractive* alternative. The City of Culture event therefore, was accused

of excluding the city's 'real' culture from the celebrations.

This conclusion leads to the second aspect of the critique identified above. If there was to be no room for a morally informed Left Wing culture in the event, what type of culture was celebrated ? Workers City argued in this context, that Glasgow 1990 represented a 'de-politicised' culture. Further, in parts of the year where the city's history was considered, 'sanitised' accounts only were being circulated. The Red Clydeside era in particular, had been given insufficient attention. In a live debate with Bob Palmer on Radio 3, Sean Damer, referring to the controversy in Glasgow which surrounded the cultural substance of the event, argued;

'One of the reasons why there is a vociferous critique of the Year of Culture is because the whole programme reflects nothing of the traditional radical and socialist working class culture and politics of this city. You would need an electronmicroscope to find the city's political past represented. You would wear yourself out trying to believe that there was a Red Clyde in this place.'

(Sean Damer Third Ear Radio 3 3/10/90)

In the absence of politically informed cultural events, a P.R. oriented culture, involving a number of high profile, one off events dominated. These events were designed with the preferences of the yuppies, tourists and investors in mind. David Kemp (1990 p4) characterised the event as involving a 'Disneyfied' culture. Giving clarity to this distinction between Glasgow's organic culture and that celebrated in the event, Workers City counterposed the official slogan, 'There's a lot Glasgowing on' with their own; 'There's a lot of con going on'.

The emphasis in the groups characterisation of the event, unlike that observed in 7.3 - 7.4, was not upon high culture but more the 'spectacular' and 'glitzy' nature of events. The Year of Culture was, above all else, a 'showy' affair with events which would secure headlines thrust to the forefront in terms of funding. It was not so much high culture but *commercial* culture which was at the root of the critique.

7.8 'Culture's for poofs'

In rounding off this chapter, reference has to be made to a third line of argument in which Glasgow's organic culture, was suggested to sit in opposition to such notions as 'opera and ballet'. This line was only encountered in the interview with the Railwaymen, but it nevertheless is sufficiently different to justify inclusion here. One interviewee suggested that 'culture' among working class males was considered to be a bit 'poofy'. This was attributed to the need to keep up a 'hard man image';

'You say to the working class man, you know opera, and they'll say you're a poof. That's exactly what they'll say. They'll say you're a poof. You know that comes from the hard man image.'

(Railwaymen Interview 10/10/90)

This same individual went on to say that because one of his work mates took a girl from a 'well to do' area in the city out to see a play, he was referred to at work

as a 'Rent Boy'. What is significant about this observation is that gender and class appeared to intermesh in the interpretation of the meaning of 'culture'. This theme did not present itself in other interviews and, whilst meriting closer examination, did not emerge in direct commentary on the Year of Culture.

7.9 Summary

The central argument explored in this chapter has been that the efforts made by image builders to 'reaestheticise' Glasgow during 1990, were met with opposition from some groups in the city who were 'uncomfortable' with the new-aesthetic environment. Three sources of conflict were examined. First, it was pointed out that some people defined 'culture' in terms of 'high art', that is, such things as 'opera', 'ballet', 'art galleries', etc.. Glasgow's culture was suggested to be in opposition to this.

For some media commentators, Glasgow's designation as European City of Culture was considered to be something of a joke. Using a number of stereotypes, Glaswegians were suggested to be 'primitive' and somewhat 'backward'. They lacked the ability to appreciate works of art. Thus, the decision to locate a cultural event in the city was treated as a source of humour. Alternative responses by Glaswegians pointed to the fact that a rejection of 'opera and ballet' did not amount to a dismissal of Glasgow's organic culture as 'primitive'. Advocates of 'high culture'

were suggested to be 'shallow individuals', only concerned with their image. Their motives were inauthentic. Further, questions were raised as to 'who says' that Glaswegian culture is inferior. The judgements of the so-called 'experts' were ridiculed.

The second area examined was the Workers City critique. It was shown that this group regarded Glasgow's 'real' culture to be a radical socialist one, derived from the Red Clydeside era. With the objective of using culture as a means to a critical voice, this group argued that the City of Culture event ought to have been used to highlight the plight of the local working classes. Its foundations in Glasgow's image building campaign however, meant that the city's real culture had been *sanitised*. In its place, a 'glitzy', P.R. oriented event had been organised. Glasgow's culture had been 'de-politicised' during 1990 therefore.

Finally, there was some limited evidence that thinking was stratified according to gender. Although an isolated theme, there was evidence that 'culture' was considered to be effeminate. To go to 'opera or ballet' would lead to the accusation of being 'poofy'. Having demonstrated that there were currents of discontent in the city over the cultural substance of the event, attention will now be focussed on a concrete example of this discontent - the Elspeth King Affair. The Elspeth King Affair highlights in particular, the extent to which the Workers City critique had wider

currency in the city during 1990.

CHAPTER 8 - THE ELSPETH KING AFFAIR : A CONCRETE
MANIFESTATION OF CRITICISMS OF THE CULTURAL
SUBSTANCE OF THE EVENT

8.1 Introduction

Whilst the Elspeth King Affair peaked between May and August 1990, the incident has to be situated within a longer time frame if it is to be properly understood. To this end, it is necessary to examine the major actors involved, and their relationships prior to 1990. This will be undertaken in section 8.2. The particular incident which sparked off the Affair, and the reaction of critics to it will then be considered (section 8.3). In section 8.4, attention will be directed towards efforts made by officials and in the press to undermine the critics argument. Finally, the Affair was inflamed when one of the key individuals involved was sacked by the District Council for taking the side of the critics. This led to claims of 'suppression'. These claims will be outlined in section 8.5.

It is imperative that the limits of the following discussion be understood. The intention here is to present a case study of the way discontent about the cultural substance of the City of Culture event manifested itself in 'real' political debate in the city. In particular, by discussing the Affair, the significance of the Workers City critique (the second critique examined in Chapter 7) can be better understood. No attempt can be made here however, to account for what 'really' happened. The intention is simply to

examine accounts of the incident which the actors involved themselves put forward. Establishing the 'truth' content of allegations remains a task for future research.

8.2 Background context

The key actors involved in the Elspeth King Affair were Elspeth King herself, Michael Donnelly, and Julian Spalding. Elspeth King, a Social Historian, was Curator of the People's Palace Museum. This is located in a relatively deprived area in the city's *East End*. Donnelly was King's assistant and common law husband. Their professional partnership at the Palace had lasted for over 15 years. Julian Spalding was and remains Director of Glasgow's Museums and Art Galleries. Previously Director of Art Galleries in Manchester, Spalding was appointed to this post in early 1989 following competition from, among others, Elspeth King. Based at Kelvingrove Art Gallery in the more affluent *West End*, Spalding was in charge of the City's Art Galleries, Museums and Archaeological sites prior to the Affair.

In setting out the context within which the Affair took place, it is necessary to understand the reputation of the People's Palace in Glasgow, and the relationship which existed between Spalding and King prior to 1990. The Palace is known locally for its emphasis upon traditional working class culture. At the most prosaic level, the Palace is noted for putting on exhibitions which reflect life as it is currently, and has been lived by 'ordinary folk' in Glasgow in the past.

Exhibitions in the years preceding 1990 for instance, included a celebration of the Centenary of Celtic Football Club. Further, a permanent feature in the Palace is a replica of a typical tenement living room, preserved as it used to be in the 1950s. One feature of the Palace then, is its concentration upon Glasgow's 'ordinary', everyday culture.

On a more political level, the Palace was also renowned for its celebration of Glasgow's socialist traditions. Recent initiatives have included for example, the commissioning of paintings of 'Glasgow's Proletarian Past' from local artist Ken Currie. These paintings make reference to the Red Clydeside era. A more general exhibition, celebrating the 'Centenary of Keir Hardie's Scottish Labour Party', has also just recently been completed (Donnelly 1990a). Combined, the Palace's emphasis upon working class life and politics, was summarised by Michael Donnelly as a 'warts and all approach to history' (Donnelly 1990b p29).

King's knowledge of Glasgow's history was widely acclaimed. (see Gray (A.) 1990). In an article in the New Statesman and Society, James Kelman described King in the following terms; 'King is rated by many within her profession as one of the top Curators in the English speaking world.'

(Kelman 1990a p32)

Further, in an interview on Radio 4, she was introduced by Joanna Buchan as;

'One of the top three Curators in Europe.'

(Interview with Elspeth King Radio 4 13/6/91)

As a mark of King's expertise, the People's Palace was awarded the European Museum of the Year title in 1981 and the British Museum of the Year award in 1983.

Both King and Donnelly were well known figures locally, Their fame stemmed largely from their, at times, heroic efforts in turning around the fortunes of the museum. These efforts were referred to by Donnelly as being in the face of a 'hostile District Council' (Donnelly 1990b p29, Kemp 1990 p17). The Palace it was argued, had been underfunded and systematically ignored by the Labour group prior to their arrival in 1975. A lack of investment had resulted in a . museum with;

'ancient heating systems, antediluvian lighting and nineteenth century display cases. Storage and workshop space was non existent, there was no photographic equipment, or even such basics as a modern typewriter. The museum had no shop, cafeteria, publications, postcards or publicity materials. The winter gardens were closed, semi-derelict and awaited inevitable demolition.'

(Donnelly 1990a p11)

In a bid to reverse the fortunes of the museum, King and Donnelly were said to have worked long hours, buying artifacts with their own money, and personally salvaging items from buildings due to be demolished, and waste tips (Gray (A.) 1990, Kelman 1990a and Kemp 1990).

The efforts of King and Donnelly in turning around the fortunes of the People's Palace were also used to represent them as 'selfless heroes' who thought of Social History, to use Donnelly's own words, 'as a sacred cause rather

than a smart career move' (Michael Donnelly BBC 1 Focal Point 12/12/90). Their motivation derived from a 'genuine' interest in Glasgow's Social History. They invested 'body and soul' in the job. In an interview on Radio 4 in June 1991, King was asked what she normally did with her leisure time. She replied;

'I don't have any really. I spend all my time, literally every minute I breath, thinking of ways I can improve the exhibition, ways I can get an old teapot, or an old cake recipe for our exhibition on cooking. It's a life and soul job for me.'

(Interview with Elspeth King Radio 4 13/6/91)

Entering into 1990, therefore, King and Donnelly had the reputation of being passionate supporters of the 'people's culture'. They were experts on the city's history, and went to extraordinary lengths to build up a collection of 'collective folk memories'. All this was undertaken without assistance from the Labour group.

The second contextual element which requires elucidation, is that of the relationship between Spalding and King which existed prior to 1990. In understanding this relationship, it is necessary to document King's (public) opposition to the Glasgow's Glasgow exhibition. David Kemp (1990) provides a useful summary and the following discussion is based upon it.

It has already been noted that Glasgow's Glasgow was one of the Flagship events during 1990. It represented an attempt to trace out Glasgow's 800 year history. Self

consciously geared towards attracting tourists, Glasgow's Glasgow constituted an example of the growing number of Heritage Schemes in existence. Spectacular in design, and involving laser shows and video images, the event constituted an example of what Ley and Olds (1988) refer to as 'heroic consumption'.

Given claims that the People's Palace had been neglected by the Labour group, it was not surprising that when it appeared that a seemingly unending stream of money was being put into Glasgow's Glasgow (some £4.6 million in the end), King began to voice opposition. Expenditure on Glasgow's Glasgow was symptomatic, she argued, of the devaluation of the city's traditional working class culture which was taking place during 1990. The 'warts and all' approach, including reference to the city's socialist past, clearly could not be accommodated within the image building campaign. It was for this reason that the People's Palace had been neglected in favour of a more P.R. oriented cultural event.

The function of the Glasgow's Glasgow exhibition was said to be primarily that of attracting tourists. This function required not a correct account of the city's history, but a 'hyped up' alternative. The exhibition consequently failed to properly represent Glasgow's history. As a statement on what actually happened in the past, it was 'academically unsound' King argued (Kemp 1990).

In a bid to ensure the successful organisation of the

Glasgow's Glasgow exhibition, Spalding invited King to join the project in the middle of 1989. In return for her assistance, he offered her temporary promotion to the Keeper of Social History grade (meaning that King would be in charge of all Glasgow's museums). King's reply was in the form of a letter to Spalding on the 28th August 1989;

'To become involved in the exhibition', the least I require in return is a recognition of departmental status for Social History, my immediate appointment as Keeper and Michael Donnelly's appointment as deputy keeper.'

(Kemp 1990 p15)

In a field interview conducted with David Kemp in January 1991, he clarified this quote by suggesting that it had intended to mean that King was wanting to gain more control over Cultural Policy in the long run so that she could ensure a future for working class culture - rather than that she had put personal ambition first. In making the demand however, King was evidently asking for more than Spalding had offered. She wanted her appointment to Keeper made permanent and Donnelly's position to be extended to cover all local museums. Spalding turned down King's request. Despite this, he continued to ask her advice at a more informal level.

In September 1989, King prepared a list of some twenty four questions about the exhibition for which she thought Spalding ought to be accountable. Kemp (1990 p28) cites some of the questions outlined in this letter; 'who vetted this project and its directors Clelland and Brampton in the first place'?, 'what is their record and where can it be

seen?', 'where were they before 1990 was announced?', and where will they be in 1991?'. The letter then proceeded to cast doubt upon the viability of the exhibition from a financial point of view. It questioned whether Glaswegians would be prepared to pay the large entry fee (£4 for adults) and thus whether the projected income from customers was realistic. If it was too late to cancel the exhibition she suggested, it should be substantially downgraded.

Prior to 1990 therefore, King had taken a stance against one of the City of Culture's major events. She had made conditional an invitation from Julian Spalding to participate in the organisation of Glasgow's Glasgow, and had made demands on Spalding as to what ought to be done with the exhibition. As a tourist attraction, it had little to say about Glasgow's true history and authentic culture. As the *People's Palace* was being run down, the District Council, it was argued, was investing millions in a P.R. oriented event.

8.3 The appointment and local reaction

It was against this background that Julian Spalding announced in early 1990 that the Council was to appoint a new and permanent Keeper of the city's Social History. This individual, to be appointed by Spalding (and other councillors), was to be in charge of all of Glasgow's museums, including the *People's Palace*.

According to the media, Elspeth King was the obvious choice for the post. Her successful transformation of the People's Palace, her international reputation and selfless pursuit of Social History as a 'sacred cause', would ensure that there was no serious contest. Indeed, MacCalman (1990a) reports that Union Leaders representing King were 'outraged' that she had not been given the job automatically. Apart from anything else, they argued, she had effectively been doing it anyway whilst at the Palace, and had been rewarded only with a Curatorial salary. Further, given that Spalding had already offered her the Keeper's post temporarily, he had already shown faith in her ability to do the job.

Spalding nevertheless resisted appointing King automatically, arguing in a now infamous phrase; 'there will be no jobs for the girls'. Interviews were conducted at the end of May 1990 and shortly after, it was announced that a relatively unknown local Curator, Mark O'Neil, was to get the job in preference to Elspeth King. The decision was something of a surprise. O'Neil was an Irishman and had lived in the city only a few years. Further, his entry into the Museum profession had been by appointment to the small Springburn Museum by Elspeth King herself. He was, therefore, regarded as her Junior. Having been turned down for the post, King was told that she would now have some of her Curatorial powers at the Palace taken over by O'Neil. For example, Spalding insisted that all her daily correspondence be vetted by O'Neil.

O'Neil's appointment generated intense controversy in the city. On June 7th 1990, shortly after the decision was announced, Workers City organised a protest meeting at the Dolphington Arts Centre in Bridgeton. Over one hundred people attended this meeting. Its purpose was to formulate a strategy of opposition. A number of tactics were discussed including; winning over the press by publishing directly and encouraging journalists to rehearse their argument, lobbying sympathetic Labour councillors, organising protest demonstrations outside the City Chambers, and compiling petitions (Robertson 1990, Smith 1990).

As a result of this meeting, two petitions were handed into the City Chambers; one signed by over 10,000 people (including 25 Labour councillors), the other signed by over 67 celebrities including Billy Connolly, local pop star and Rector of Glasgow University Pat Kane, and Spike Milligan. Further, the local press, especially the Glasgow Herald, expressed sympathy with the critics' argument and generally gave backing to King (see for example Buchan's article (1990a) in the Glasgow Herald, the Editor's Comments (1990) in the Glasgow Herald on June 11th, and Reid's (1990) article in the Evening Times). Protest marches also went ahead on a number of occasions. In addition, a documentary on the affair was broadcast on BBC 1 in December 1990 (Focal Point 12/12/90). Indeed, so inflated did the matter become that the late Norman Buchan MP raised the issue at Scottish Question Time in the House of Commons.

The immediate point made through these channels of protest was that the appointment of Mark O'Neil be reconsidered, and Elspeth King offered the job. Workers City, however, seized upon the affair to make their bigger criticism of the Year of Culture. The argument they advanced was that Elspeth King's lack of success in securing the post was part of a web of conspiracy sown by Pat Lally to 'sanitise' Glasgow's culture and to weed out any prominent 'traditionalists' who might threaten his plans during 1990. King, with her association with the working class oriented People's Palace Museum, and public opposition to the Glasgow's Glasgow exhibition, constituted a threat to the ambitions the council had for 'culture' during 1990. She was involved with the wrong type of culture and clearly was going to be a thorn in attempts to impose a new 'yuppified' one. Spalding, referred to as 'the hatchet man from Manchester', had been brought in to get rid of her and the creation of the post of Keeper was simply the vehicle. Elspeth King was a martyr to the working class cause (Kemp 1990, Kelman 1990a, Kelman 1990c).

Over and above the activities of the critics and the massive press coverage given to the Affair, there was a tremendous public outcry also. This was reflected not only in the 10,000 names collected in the main petition, but also in the volume of letters sent to the local press. Over 500 hundred letters were received for instance, by the Glasgow Herald. The majority of these were in favour of Elspeth King. This was more than was subsequently

received for any other incident during 1990, including the impending Gulf War and fears over the closure of the Ravenscraig Steel Plant for instance.

Of the 500 letters received, some 33 were gathered in the course of compiling the media library. It is believed that these 33 represent the total number of letters which the Herald published. Whilst some of the letters supported King only on the basis of her Curatorial skills, the tone of the public response was close to the argument that Workers City was using. The emphasis was upon the 'sanitisation' of the city's traditional working class culture in favour of a 'yuppiefied' alternative. King's lack of success was to be explained through reference to her integrity in remaining faithful to the 'real' socialist history of the city whilst Labour councillors deserted the cause.

The following three quotes, taken from letters to the Herald in the two weeks following the announcement, illustrate the type of thinking involved:

'Sir - I read with disgust of the widely predicted decision to reject Elspeth King for the post of Glasgow's Keeper of Social History, a job which she has carried out brilliantly for years before the title was invented...If they [Glasgow councillors], do not have enough of their background left in them to feel ashamed, let them be assured that there are many in the Labour Party who do. The Labour Party and Trade Union movement in this city have a duty to stand up for Elspeth King - not only to right a grievous wrong against an individual, but also to defend our history against those who would consign it to the Kailyard.'

(MacLennan 1990 p10)

'Elspeth King's non-appointment to her own enhanced job was a foregone conclusion given the new yuppie 'image' worshipped in Glasgow's corridors of power...Glasgow's culture is in fact being swept under the carpet to gratify a sanitised 'image' of our city. Elspeth King has had the temerity, and worse, the integrity, to face the facts of Glasgow's history. For this she is being sacrificed and we are immeasurably deprived of a truer believer in Glasgow's comprehensive culture.'

(Russell 1990 p8)

'It is extremely hard to understand the narrow minded philistines who appear determined to destroy this much loved museum. Maybe the Labour Party is too powerful in Glasgow and the councillors have lost touch with their working class roots and want to see history being rewritten. I wonder which tells a truer story of Glasgow, the Burrell Collection based upon shrewd investment by a rich eccentric, or the People's Palace, with its evocative collection and sensitive presentation of Glasgow life.'

(Hancox 1990 10)

8.4 Alternative accounts

Whilst critics tried to account for King's lack of success in terms of her cultural commitments, it has to be noted that alternative accounts were in circulation. In this section, attention turns in particular, to accounts which tried to undermine the argument critics were using. It is useful to begin with the position District Council officials took. This is relatively easily outlined.

In his 2,000 word response in the Glasgow Herald to those criticisms which mounted over the four week period following the decision (Lally 1990a), Pat Lally argued that neither he, nor any other councillor, had interfered with the decision as to who was to get the Keeper's post. Further he suggested that interviews had been conducted in a fair and democratic

way and consequently, that the decision was a legitimate one. In a later comment in the Evening Times, Lally added that in any event, 'he had no idea of her (King's) views on almost anything' (Anonymous(a) 1990 p19).

A similar line of defence was used by Julian Spalding. In a letter to the New Statesman and Society, he suggested that Kelman's (1990a) earlier article in that journal represented a distortion of reality. The reason King had failed to secure the post was not because of her cultural affiliations. It was simply because 'she was not the ablest candidate for the job she'd applied for' (Spalding 1990 p22). According to officials therefore, King's lack of success was to be explained simply in terms of her failure to impress in the course of normal interviewing procedures. Workers City were to be criticised therefore, for using an innocent appointment to promote their own political viewpoint.

Some media commentators were more direct in their criticism of the Workers City account. Ajay Close, writing in the Scotland on Sunday in June 1990 for instance, argued that Workers City's argument was flawed in two key respects (Close 1990). First, implicit in the Workers City story was a representation of O'Neil as 'a sharp suited, middle class opera buff, snug in the pockets of the City Chambers' politburo' (Close 1990 p6). However, in his capacity as Curator of the Springburn Museum in Glasgow, the post he held prior to being promoted, O'Neil had established a solid commitment

to working class/political culture. For instance, his exhibitions included one on 'why Springburn has the fourth highest unemployment rate in Britain', and on the effects of the demise of locomotive construction, a topic of great interest locally (Farrell 1990 p11). To what extent then, was it possible to argue that King was victimised because of her cultural affiliations, when the successful candidate himself shared those commitments?

Second, he pointed out that some of King's supporters were concerned that the issue had been 'highjacked' by a Left Wing faction (Workers City) whose principal interest was in 'replacing Pat Lally with a Left Wing council leadership less sympathetic to the private sector' (Close 1990 p11). This comment derived from King's initial reaction to the appointment of O'Neil. Quoting Spalding's phrase, 'there are no jobs for the girls', she launched an appeal on the basis of sexual discrimination. This appeal was subsequently withdrawn. The explanation offered was that King feared that Workers City were 'using' her misfortune for their own ends. A report in The Scotsman on June 12th 1990, for instance, quotes King's soliciter saying;

'Ms King found it particularly unfortunate that reference had been made in the course of comment on the issue to her political opinions...My client is not and never has been a member of any political party, and does not intend to become a member of any political party.'

(Magee 1990 p3)

This prompted Close to argue that if King did not see the issue in class terms, what right did Workers City have to draw

such a conclusion.

As a consequence of these two 'omissions' in the Workers City account, Close argued that two 'Conspiracy Theories' were in circulation in Glasgow during 1990. The first, advanced by Workers City, suggested that the city's true culture was being displaced by a District Council more interested in catering for the private sector than the local community. The second however, constructed a different scenario; that of a Left Wing faction who had seized upon a perfectly innocent appointment to further their own political ambitions.

8.5 The 'gagging' of King and Donnelly's sacking .

Throughout the period June to late August 1990, two voices were particularly conspicuous by their absence; those of Elspeth King and Michael Donnelly. The reason for this lay in the council's rules regarding employees making statements to the press. These rules stated quite simply that no council employee could talk to the press regarding council business. The rules further stated that only Pat Lally, the council leader, could talk publicly about council decisions. Ordinary councillors could only pass comment on issues which affected their personal wards. This was to ensure, Lally claimed, that the council could convey its policies in a clear and unambiguous way to the electorate (Focal Point BBC 1 12/12/90).

For Elspeth King, the implication was that she could not

put her own side of the case across. This fact was played upon in the BBC 1 (Focal Point 12/12/90) documentary on the affair, where silent pictures of King at work in the People's Palace were shown and an explanation for the silence provided. Further, even over one year later, in September 1991, when she was asked if she thought that the decision not to promote her was a 'fair one', King replied; 'I can't give a fair answer to that question' (Interview with Elspeth King Radio 4 13/6/90). Anger about council restrictions was inflamed by the fact that during the period, both Julian Spalding and Mark O'Neil, were freely making statements to the media (for instance Spalding (1990), Farrell (1990)). It seemed that council rules were being waived whenever it suited.

In contrast to King, Workers City and other critics, were free to express their point of view. In the course of so doing, they concentrated upon this very issue of selective censorship. They argued that the council's position was contrary to the Labour tradition of empowering the 'worker' by giving them access to channels of protest. This point was made by both Kelman and local MEP Janey Buchan, in articles written in the New Statesman and Society;

'Both Mr. Spalding and Ms King are the employees of a Labour controlled authority - Glasgow District Council. Yet Mr. Spalding is free to speak to the press - and does - as does Mr O'Neil. Ms King, on the other hand, is forbidden to speak to the press and has to endure attack after attack.'

(Buchan 1990b p20)

'One significant factor in the present controversy is the inability of officialdom to countenance criticism...Elspeth King is denied the right to defend herself publicly. She is not allowed to speak to the media. She is not at liberty to

express her fears of the damage the new regime will cause the People's Palace, under a policy opposed not only to her but to the basic principles of the Labour Party itself.'

(Kelman 1990a p33)

Towards the end of August 1990, the Affair took yet another twist. An article appeared in the Glasgow Herald on August 23rd, entitled, 'Peace breaks out at the Palace' (Gray (I.) 1990 p3). This was accompanied by a photograph of Spalding and King smiling together, and a quote from Spalding proclaiming; 'we were never not speaking' (Gray, (I.) 1990 p3). Giving the appearance that the issue had been resolved, the article so incensed Michael Donnelly, that he decided he could no longer hold his silence. On the night of the 23rd of August, he spoke for the first time at a public meeting organised by Workers City. At this meeting, he condemned the decision not to appoint King. Donnelly followed this up, *despite warnings from Pat Lally*, with a major article in the Glasgow Herald on the 29th of August, which was also highly critical of the council.

Donnelly's argument mirrored that voiced by the critics. The decision not to appoint Elspeth King was the result of the Palace's radical socialist leanings he argued, leanings which put it out of favour given the logic of the City of Culture event. The Affair was a key example, he argued, of the attack on the socialist 'soul' of the city which the local Labour Party were undertaking. Council policies were Thatcherite in inspiration, being more geared towards selling the city to the private sector than providing for

the local community. For instance, in the article in the Glasgow Herald on August 29th, Donnelly argued;

'The hostility directed at Elspeth King has its roots in.. the steady abandonment of the Labour Party of its historic commitment to Socialism. That process, combined with the wish to bury the facts of the past which had become inconvenient, and to superimpose a new sanitised, marketable image of the city, required not a critical Social History...but a bland self congratulatory hype.'

(Donnelly 1990a p11)

This position was outlined more fully in a follow up article published in the Glasgow Herald in October 1990, dealing more generally with the City of Culture concept.

The following quote, taken from this article, represents an excellent summary of the main line of criticism Workers City was making;

'If Glasgow is to avoid some of the worst aspects of urban decline, with its attendant problems of ghettoisation and extremes of poverty and wealth, it must base its future on a sound and critical analysis of its cultural and political past and present. To face up to that task with all its implications, was a unique challenge implicit in the award of the City of Culture title. But that opportunity was rejected and instead the District Council allowed itself to be highjacked by the concept cowboys and mythologists of the public relations industry. Their object was not to hold up to inspection and critical analysis the radical past of this city and its unique contribution to Socialism. On the contrary, they considered much of this past to be inglorious, and anathematised those who take a pride in its achievements.'

(Donnelly 1990c p9)

In his article published on August 29th, Donnelly also criticised Lally for threatening him with the sack if he broke council rules and spoke out about the affair. In doing so, he likened Lally to 'Stalin', a comparison that was made frequently during 1990 (see the conclusion to the

thesis);

'This is one of the dirtiest and most immoral witch-hunts since the days of McCarthy. The chief witchfinder is Lally, and that is why he threatens me in classic Stalinist fashion with removal for 'my own good'. It is inconceivable to him that I am expressing opposition to his behaviour out of principle.'

(Donnelly 1990a p11)

As a result of his speaking out against the council, Donnelly was sacked as Assistant Curator to the People's Palace in early September 1990. He appealed against this decision, however, on October 21st 1990, under the gaze of television cameras and with a Workers City protest outside, lost the appeal at an internal review in the City Chambers. He took the case to an industrial tribunal which he eventually lost on August 12th 1991, almost one year after being sacked.

Throughout, Donnelly, like King, was represented as a martyr to working class culture. The articles springing from his dismissal allowed the critics further access to the media to make their general criticism of the cultural content of 1990. Following his dismissal, Donnelly became publicly associated with Workers City, and exploited his position to help the group publicise their viewpoint (he played for example, an anchor role in the Focal Point documentary on BBC 1 (11/12/90)).

Throughout the affair, Elspeth King remained silent as intimated above. The closest she came to making a public statement on the matter was in an interview conducted in

late 1991. The logic of her argument was identical to that advanced by Donnelly and Workers City;

'There was a great fear during 1990 that history would be twisted to other ends and that the historical processes I had helped set up here were being perverted or interfered with or used for other purposes. People were very upset about that. They look upon this place as their repository for their collective folk memories of the city. It's become a kind of secular shrine.'

(Interview with Elspeth King Radio 4 13/6/91)

In the rare instance when she expressed an opinion in public therefore, King attributed the controversy surrounding her non-appointment to opposition against politicians in the city who wanted to *manipulate* (observe 'twist', 'pervert' 'interfere') local culture for other purposes. The controversy which was generated was attributed to people refusing to allow their 'secular shrine' to be swept aside in favour of an alternative culture.

The stringent constraints imposed upon her nevertheless, (the fact that she could not open her own mail and always had to ask for consent from O'Neil when commissioning new work for instance), proved overbearing. On the 3rd of October 1991, more than two years after her initial argument with Julian Spalding regarding the Glasgow's Glasgow exhibition, King tendered her resignation and left the People's Palace. She now works with the Dumfermline Trust in the Fife Region. Of the three main actors involved, only Spalding remains in his initial job.

8.6 Summary

The Elspeth King affair constituted a concrete expression of the criticism which emerged in Glasgow during 1990 vis-à-vis the cultural substance of the event. The magnitude of the controversy indicates that this criticism was of key political significance in Glasgow during the year. Three main themes were explored in the chapter. First, it was suggested that the lack of success of Elspeth King in securing the post of Keeper of Social History was widely accounted for in terms of her cultural affiliations. King represented a *Guardian* of the city's working class history and culture. She had shown commitment to this history and culture by refusing Julian Spalding's invitation to participate in the Glasgow's Glasgow exhibition. Council officials who had 'deserted' the Labour traditions of the city, saw her as a threat to their efforts to develop a 'yuppified' culture. This is why she had been passed over.

Second, officials were shown to have responded to these allegations by dismissing them as false. King did not get the post simply because she was not good enough. The decision was a fair one. Some media commentators also pointed to weaknesses in the critics' account. The Workers City argument Ajay Close suggested (Close 1990), was just as open to the accusation of being a *Conspiracy Theory*, as the council's. The implication was that the council could not be criticised for selling out local culture - at least not on the basis of their decision not to promote Elspeth King.

Finally, the lack of ability of King and Donnelly to put their side of the argument forward was noted. Council rules meant that only Pat Lally could speak out on council matters. Donnelly's public comments on the Affair resulted in his dismissal. Despite this, the other participants talked freely, with Julian Spalding even castigating King's performance at interview. This led to the criticism that Pat Lally was behaving like a Dictator. His suppression of criticism was likened to 'Stalinism'.

In the Elspeth King Affair then, the council attempted to distance the appointment of a new Keeper of Social History, from the wider question of the cultural substance of the year. This question however, had to be addressed in other contexts. Therefore, it is towards official accounts of the cultural substance of the City of Culture event that attention now turns.

CHAPTER 9 - OFFICIAL ACCOUNTS OF THE CULTURAL SUBSTANCE OF THE EVENT

9.1 Introduction

In considering how officials of the City of Culture event sought to justify themselves in the midst of criticism of the cultural substance of the event, attention will be directed towards five related arguments. First, officials persistently argued that an explicit objective of the event was to adopt an 'anti-elitist' approach to culture (section 9.2). Second, they suggested that one reason why people were under the 'misapprehension' that the event was an exercise in *high culture* was because of biased news reporting (section 9.3).

Third, referring explicitly to the mechanics of the organisation of projects, officials were keen to play down *their* own role and to suggest that the event was designed to release 'energies' already in the community (section 9.4). Fourth, related directly to the Workers City critique, officials were keen to construct links between the event and economic regeneration, which did not involve compromising the idea that the event was *culturally motivated* (section 9.5). Finally, officials were called upon on certain occasions to justify the lack of reference in the event to the city's socialist past (section 9.6). With the emphasis upon public debate on the year, this chapter is based largely on the media library built up whilst working at the Festivals

Office. Some use is also made of field interviews undertaken directly with City of Culture officials.

Section 9.2 A 'cultural' event for the community, not an
'arts' event for elites

In the previous chapter, it was argued that one criticism levelled against the City of Culture event was that it was primarily an exercise in 'high culture'. 'Culture' in this line of argument was taken to mean more sophisticated levels of artistic appreciation. In the field interview with Jill Campbell McKay, it was acknowledged that the chief issue which the Press Office had to deal with was criticism that the event was 'not for us'. In defence of this, McKay was keen to stress that she had tried to make it clear that the City of Culture event was relevant to all Glaswegians. According to McKay;

'I knew right from the start that the main problem we would have was convincing people that it was not just for the ABC l's. You know, it would have something for the working man from Castlemilk and Easterhouse or whatever. And you know, just looking at the questions I'm asked by journalists, that has been the real issue in practice.'

(Jill Campbell McKay Fieldwork Interview 11/9/90)

The criticism that the event had bypassed 'ordinary' Glaswegians was one which Pat Lally also sought to combat. In almost every major statement he made on 1990, he stressed that it was council policy that 1990 would 'seek to involve everyone' in Glasgow. For instance, in radio interviews in the summer of 1990, Lally stated;

'The strategy for the whole of the year is to involve all of the people of the city and I think that's certainly the right one and I think we're being successful within the terms of that objective.'

(Pat Lally Whose Culture Radio Clyde 2 12/7/90)

'We have 200 odd events in community venues and involving community organisations. So clearly, that's an awful lot of people across the city in those areas busy beavering away at the present time creating and establishing their events. So I'm satisfied that our objective of involving all our communities in the celebration is being achieved.'

(Pat Lally Today Radio 4 12/5/90)

Lally's references to 'all of the people' and 'all our communities', underlines the extremes to which officials were going to get across the message that the City of Culture event was not just a celebration of 'opera and 'ballet'. In defending himself against similar criticism in an article published in the Glasgow Herald, Lally offered a practical example to back up his case. Referring to the 'Big Day', a free rock and pop festival held on Glasgow Green on June 3rd, Lally pointed out;

'For me, the greatest measure of the success of 1990 is the lack of elitism and sheer range of access to events... My own favourite anti-elitist memory is of the Big Day, and how any Glaswegian, rich or poor, could have a great day out, sustained by a packet of sandwiches and a bottle of Irn Bru if that was all they could afford.'

(Pat Lally Glasgow Herald June 30th 1990a p6)

In defending themselves against the same criticism, Bob Palmer and Neil Wallace, the programme co-ordinators, invoked a distinction between 'art' and 'culture'. 'Art' was considered to be a form of elitism; more oriented

towards those with a *cultivated* taste. 'Culture', in contrast, was defined as being much wider in scope and concerned with the mundane elements of everyday life. The City of Culture event, against this background, was argued to be a 'cultural' rather than 'artistic' event. The following three quotes were offered by Palmer and Wallace in the context of radio discussions on the cultural content of the event:

'Some people think art and culture are much the same thing. Well they sometimes are. But culture is more than art and in fact can on some occasions be an enemy to art...If you look at the way people either as individuals or communities or cities care to express themselves, care to live in a certain way, care to pass their leisure time, the kind of things they buy, the way they dress, their patter, even their street lighting, the way they get involved in sport, their love for a particular type of music, if you scrape all that together and attempt to do it justice, then that's what we are trying to do in 1990.'

(Neil Wallace Talk in Sunday Radio Clyde 2 7/1/90)

'What we've tried to underline time and time again, is that when we talk about cultural events we don't mean the arts. The arts will probably form the background to the event, but we're convinced that this has to be much more of a popular event with wide mass appeal. We are out to give as much rope as possible to all organisations who want to tell us about themselves, and that includes tiny voluntary community organisations as much as the Scottish National Orchestra.'

(Neil Wallace Radio Clyde 2 Talk in Sunday 2/7/89)

'I think what will make the event distinctive is the fact that we are concentrating very much upon community involvement and participation. We feel that 1990 is about the celebration of the entire city and have decided not to become too preoccupied with single definitions of culture. That is, 1990 is not an arts festival, involving the traditional arts such as music, dance, theatre, literature, the visual arts and so on. These will be an important part of

the overall framework. But equally important will be smaller events held out in the community centres and schools and neighbourhoods.'

(Bob Palmer Head On Radio Scotland 31/1/89)

This emphasis upon the event being organised with grass roots participation at its heart, was also articulated in the context of comparisons between Glasgow and the previous Cities of Culture. As noted in chapter 6, Glasgow was the sixth city to celebrate the title. The previous Cultural Capitals were Athens, Florence, Amsterdam, Berlin, and Paris. When compared with these cities, some commentators were keen to stress that the choice of Glasgow was something of a surprise (as noted in chapter 7).

When confronted with this line of reasoning, both Palmer and Wallace defended the event on the basis of its emphasis upon culture organic to the city and not glossy, international events. Wallace, for instance, in a interview in January 1990 on Radio Clyde 2, pointed out;

'When Glasgow won the title initially, it was and is a step back in important ways from everything that Athens, Florence, and Amsterdam represented. We're not pretending to be like those cities; nor are we trying to copy them. What we've done has really brought credit to the whole idea of the European Cultural Capital. What we've done is to make absolutely sure that the city we're showing to the world isn't just some kind of great international centre with many prestigious events attached to it, but we're doing justice to the things that matter here all the year round.'

(Neil Wallace Talk in Sunday Radio Clyde 2 7/1/90)

Officials of the City of Culture event therefore, were keen to stress throughout the year that the event was being run

with the ordinary Glaswegian in mind. It did not involve only elitist, *artistic* endeavour. It had deliberately set out to celebrate *culture* which was *organic* to Glasgow.

9.3 The role of the media

In the course of arguing that critics were wrong in portraying the City of Culture event as an exercise in high culture, officials made reference to the role of the media. That people made such a false allegation was attributable, in part, to the fact that the media had presented a biased view. By focussing only upon visits by the larger stars, such as Pavarotti, the Bolshoi Opera and Jessye Norman, the media had led people to think that the event was essentially a P.R. oriented celebration of elitist cultural forms. This complaint was made at the start of 1990 by Bob Palmer, in a live interview on Radio Scotland;

'Unfortunately, the media have concentrated on a number of the big names and big stars and unfortunately I think that's distorted the nature of the whole event. People forget about the 500 very small but extremely important initiatives that are taking place across Strathclyde...In order to get a real understanding of the year, one would have to look at the broad range covered.'

(Bob Palmer Tuesday Review Radio Scotland 2/1/90)

This line of reasoning persisted throughout 1990 and towards the end of the year, in the course of a live discussion on Radio Clyde 2 in December 1990 reflecting back on the event, Palmer maintained:

'You see, I would never admit that Glasgow's culture was not properly represented during 1990. What I would admit to however, is not trying hard enough to get the papers to

realise that fact. I mean we really did try but obviously not enough for some people...I don't know how many times I kept saying to my friends in the media, you know, come on out and see what's on in Drumchapel, come and see what's on in Easterhouse, but it just wasn't the type of thing that sold newspapers I guess.'

(Bob Palmer Glasgow 1990 Radio Scotland 25/12/90)

9.4 Funding - responding to energies in the community

Attempts by officials to suggest that the City of Culture event was organised with the community in mind, tended to be developed through reference to the way funds were distributed. Funding for 1990 projects was discharged either by officials approaching existing organisations and asking if they would be prepared to do something for 1990, or by groups in the community coming to officials with ideas and cost breakdowns. Evidently, with the accusation that Glasgow's communities were being bypassed, it was in the interests of officials to emphasise the latter method.

A common response made by officials consequently, was to play down their own role in deciding who was to get money and to emphasise that it was largely energies already in the community that were being 'facilitated'. That is, emphasis was upon community groups coming to officials rather than officials approaching existing bodies. For instance, having been introduced in one radio interview as the person who had 'masterminded' the 1990 project, Bob Palmer protested at a later juncture;

'Earlier you referred to me as masterminding the programme for 1990. I think that's an inaccuracy. There's been no

masterminding, no engineering of the programme. It's mainly been a responding to a whole set of energies and ideas which have emerged from every section of the community and every interest within that community.'

(Bob Palmer Tuesday Review Radio Scotland 2/1/90)

This argument was developed in the course of the year, through the claim that the event had been 'co-authored' with the local community. Officials suggested that they had formed 'partnerships' with a great many local organisations. Indeed, a great many figures were quoted regarding precisely how many local organisations officials had entered into partnership with. Estimates were generally around the 400 to 500 range. In a radio interview at the end of the year however, Bob Palmer, attempting to justify the claim that the event had been jointly 'written' with the people of Glasgow, argued that links with over 1000 local organisations had been established (Whose Culture Radio Clyde 2 20/12/90).

By talking about the event being a joint creation between officials and the community, with officials passively responding to 'energies' already in the community, the criticism that 1990 was 'not for us' could be averted. The Year of Culture was a celebration of Glasgow's *real* culture since decision making power had been decentralised down to the community itself. It was Glaswegians who had decided what was to take place; officials simply acted as 'enablers'. The structure of funding ensured that the cultural content of the event was organic to the city and not imposed from the top down. Consequently, in an interview with German magazine

Hard Times, Palmer argued;

'My view is that the people of Glasgow must feel that the cultural year is theirs and that it's not imposed upon them. They must contribute to the planning of it. And we are taking our guidance from the ideas which are coming into us. You get many traditional festivals where there are a small group of organisers who are continually imposing ideas, who are travelling a great deal and bringing ideas in...Fundamentally, our work involves the co-ordination and assisting of many hundreds of local groups, to celebrate Glasgow's culture in their own terms rather than in our terms.'

(Bob Palmer Klein and Enkemann 1989 p4)

9.5 Response to the Workers City critique

In chapter 7, it was pointed out that the Workers City critique of 1990 focussed largely upon the way culture had been 'de-politicised' in Glasgow during 1990. This was argued to be the result of the use of the event as an image building device. Events had been valued according to their potential in selling the city. The implication was that culture had been reduced to 'glitzy', 'spectacular', consumerism. The city's radical socialist traditions meanwhile, had failed to get proper representation.

From the above observations, it is clear that the Council rejected Workers City's argument. By suggesting that the event had been jointly 'written' with the community, the Council effectively dismissed the suggestion that marketing value systems were being imposed from outside. On certain occasions however, the Council were called upon to answer the Workers City critique directly. It is toward such occasions that attention is focussed here.

In 1989, the Left Wing German magazine *Hard Times* did a special feature on Glasgow 1990. Part of this feature involved quoting criticisms of the event Farquhar McLay had made in Workers City's 1988 publication (McLay 1988b). The rest of the feature was dominated by published transcripts of an interview *Hard Times* undertook with Bob Palmer (Klein and Enkemann 1989).

Referring to the Workers City argument, Palmer was asked the extent to which the District Council would be active in imposing certain restrictions upon artists. His reply suggested that interference from local politicians had not been particularly severe;

'I have found in my experience that independence relates to financing. If you are completely reliant on financing from one source, you don't have a great deal of independence artistically or culturally... That being said, in Glasgow we have a very enlightened City Council who haven't to this point expressed any clear view as to which aspects of the programme they wish to avoid. Partly this is due to history in that the city has always made a substantial investment in culture and the arts but has not in any way interfered... There still remains a respect for the artist.'

(Bob Palmer Klein and Enkemann 1989 p4).

One sees in this quote, an attempt by Palmer to play down the extent to which the Council had influenced the cultural substance of the event. In noting that the problem of artistic control traditionally arises when one funding source is dominant, Palmer shows a sensitivity to the Workers City case. By suggesting that the City Council had taken an 'enlightened' approach and that 'respect' for

the artist remained strong however, Palmer effectively dismissed the case as irrelevant to Glasgow.

As the event progressed, nevertheless, the Workers City argument gained more publicity and officials were called upon to justify their claims vis-à-vis the freedom which was being given to artists. A summary of the Council's position was provided by Neil Wallace in the field interview conducted in September 1990. At this point, the main arguments between officials and Workers City had already been rehearsed in public.

In line with the Council's overall position vis-à-vis organising 1990 around the principle of celebrating Glasgow's own culture, Wallace categorically denied that the City of Culture event had actively discriminated against Glasgow's radical Left Wing cultural heritage. Indeed he even suggested that he shared the type of political/moral approach to culture which Workers City was arguing for. As such, Workers City was accused of 'concocting a lie';

'James Kelman does not know what he's talking about when it comes to 1990...If Kelman came to me and sees what really is taking place, he would find that he and I are virtually incapable of disagreeing about anything, let alone the importance of reflecting the true culture of the city. James Kelman's problem is that he and Farquhar McLay and the rest of that lot are arguing from a position of self inflicted ignorance.'

(Neil Wallace Fieldwork Interview 6/9/90)

The problem with the Workers City critique therefore, was not that it represented a weak argument. It was simply that the

argument was not applicable as a criticism of what was actually happening in Glasgow. Kelman's position was one the Festivals Office shared.

In the course of the rest of this interview, Wallace went on to explain how the Council could simultaneously argue that the event was an image building device, and at the same time claim that it was being organised primarily by community groups. Replying to questioning as to the significance of a number of economic objectives to the organisation of the event, Wallace argued:

'I believe profoundly in the consequences and ancilliary effects of cultural investments but I would rather go to the cross as it were, than be asked to stage an event with those objectives in mind because I believe they are false objectives. Culture is itself....I mean, it really needs the integrity of people who believe in the role of artists...I don't think there's been one element of 1990 where we've deliberately set out to attract tourists or because we think it's the one and only way of interesting a group of investors or decision makers in spending more money in the city...That said, if what you do is good and in some way noteworthy, then it is automatic that the place in which the work is produced will have its reputation, its image enhanced..The thing I quote a lot is a wonderful saying of Kennedy about a rising tide carries all ships. The Year of Culture is proof of that. If you deliver a successful event and it has sufficient impact by itself, then it shares the weight of lifting a city out of its problems. But you don't do the event with those particular objectives in mind. There are elements in which it has been necessary to use the language of economic development and image to justify certain levels of expenditure and there's no doubt that from time to time we've got that one out of the cupboard and said well look, this will be good for the city's image. But the actual practice of the way in which money has been used, the expenditure's always been measured against the integrity, artistically, of what we're doing.'

(Neil Wallace Fieldwork Interview 6/9/90)

Not 'one' event in 1990, Wallace argued, was organised simply

because it would attract tourists or entice inward investment. Indeed, he even goes as far as suggesting that he would rather be 'crucified' than be responsible for an event in which economic objectives dominated. The event was culturally motivated in practice and expenditure was always measured against artistic content. Maintaining artistic integrity was always the critical factor.

Given that economic arguments had been deployed in public however, Wallace was left with the task of linking the event with economic regeneration in a way which did not compromise the idea that it was culturally motivated. This required a reformulation on his part, of the Council's position. This reformulation was achieved in two main ways. First, he suggested that the economic benefits of the event were almost *accidental*. If the event succeeded as a cultural event, then that alone would make a contribution towards improving Glasgow's image and stimulating revival. As such, Wallace stated that he 'believed profoundly' in the 'consequences' and 'ancilliary' effects of 'cultural investments'. It was correct then, to relate 1990 and economic revival, but that link was not to be thought of as interfering with the mechanics of the funding process. This argument will be explored in more detail shortly.

Second, towards the end of the quote, Wallace 'confesses' that in fact the economic logic was only drawn upon to justify expenditure that had been made on the event. This would seem to imply that the economic antecedent was simply a

means of justification and not a real goal. This represents a different account altogether. It emphasises the problems faced in justifying so much spending on culture. Spending money on generating jobs is perceived to be more legitimate than investing money on a cultural event. Nevertheless, irrespective of the rhetoric drawn upon by way of justification, the event remained a 'culturally' motivated one in practice.

In the remainder of this section, attention will turn to the first reformulation of the Council's position made by Wallace. This constructed the economic benefits of the event as 'accidental' or 'co-incidental'. In this context, the demise of the city's industrial base was often cast as undermining the 'spirit' of the local community. The Year of Culture, to this end, could make a contribution to the city's economic recovery by restoring a sense of local pride and boosting local confidence. It is useful to develop this point through reference to some concrete examples.

The first is taken from the field interview with Neil Wallace. In the context of a discussion about the economic contribution the event could make, Wallace argued;

'I mean at the end of the day, it's an obvious point to make to say that if you take an area which has suffered so much, and whose people have been put down to such an extent that they have quite literally developed a complex about being the ugly duckling, and then give that place a breath of life, it must help boost business confidence... Glasgow's history has been such a proud one that we've always thought of ourselves as a truly 'big' city in all senses of the word and that has made decline all the harder to take. What we've done in 1990 is to say to people, look, here's a leg up,

go and do things and you'll be amazed how much you can achieve. ...I suppose if you want to look at it romantically, you could think of it as a shaking the giant back to life... celebration.'

(Neil Wallace Fieldwork Interview 6/9/90)

The second example is taken from Bob Palmer's interview with the German magazine *Hard Times*, in the course of a discussion about the economic benefits of the year.

Notice that once more, John Myerscough's (1988) study is referred to by way of legitimating claims concerning the economic benefits of the event;

'A recent report was published in Glasgow...which surprised many people I think. It showed the economic impact the arts can have in a city in terms ofincreasing confidence...This, among other factors, is quite strong in relation to economic development.'

(Bob Palmer Klein and Enkemann 1989 p9)

Finally, in a live discussion reviewing the year in December 1990, Pat Lally, defending himself against criticism that the arts could not really make a substantial impact upon the economy of an area, pointed out;

'All you have to do is look around at the new attitude that Glaswegians now have to everything. It used to be, oh no, not another closure, what are we going to do, what a mess we're in. Now it's, right let's do something for ourselves... If we work hard enough we're capable of doing it...It's really all about confidence or civic pride as some people have called it.'

(Pat Lally Glasgow 1990 Radio Scotland 25/12/90)

One sees in these quotes, reference to the ability of the event, *as a cultural event per se*, to stimulate economic revival. Through a regeneration of the 'spirit', the

'giant' is to be brought back to life. Reference might be made to a number of assumptions which seem to underpin these arguments. By 'enabling' the community to realise a number of creative aspirations, the assumption appeared to be that some economically useful qualities would be generated locally. Speculating somewhat, it might be suggested that 'creativity' here might be being associated with 'entrepreneurialism', whilst 'confidence' might be being equated with the courage to take risks and realise 'Big Business' ventures. By restoring creativity and confidence, the City of Culture event might then be argued to be developing a 'local culture' conducive to economic revival.

In summary, replying specifically to the Workers City critique, officials were keen to stress that political interference, in the form of imposing regeneration objectives onto the programming of the event, was not significant. The event was run with the objective of ensuring artistic freedom and integrity. To the extent that 1990 and economic regeneration were linked, it was only co-incidental. A good cultural event could lift the spirit of the city and this might help recovery from economic demise by engendering within the local community, qualities useful to the business world.

Further, the economic rationale was talked about as representing merely a 'language' which could help justify the high level of expenditure on culture. The link between culture and regeneration in this case was a pragmatic one;

a link used by cultural protagonists to justify a large scale public investment in culture.

9.6 A culture in transition

Another criticism levelled at the event by Workers City was that the city's socialist traditions were being given inadequate representation. This criticism was certainly related to the argument that the event was being run with primarily image building objectives in mind. Having dismissed the latter however, officials still found themselves having to account for the lack of reference to the *Red Clydeside* cultural tradition.

On some occasions, officials responded by arguing that the City of Culture event did infact give proper attention to this tradition. In particular, reference was made to *The Ship*, a play commissioned by Bob Palmer from playwright Bill Bryden. This play, which ran in Glasgow for six weeks towards the end of the year, traced out working conditions in the shipyards in the city around the turn of this century. Implicit in the play was the 'collectivist' culture that permeated the lifestyles of the working classes around this period.

More frequently, however, officials chose to respond to such criticism by arguing that Glasgow's socialist tradition was 'in the past', and that Glaswegians needed to look forward and take seriously the idea that the city is rapidly changing at the present moment. In the interview

with *Hard Times*, Bob Palmer for instance, was asked whether the Workers City critique had any substance. He replied;

'Glasgow is a changing city. Its people are changing. Its attitude is changing. It's a city which is controlled by people who are now looking to the future and not to the past, and I think there is an element of working class romanticism...We have a lot of respect for that era, but respecting that culture isn't necessarily the same as ensuring that whatever happened in the past must happen in the present...There is an historical root to that culture which I don't think will die easily...but there is also vitality in the present and future.'

(Bob Palmer Klein and Enkemann 1989 p9)

Similarly, in a live discussion with Sean Damer on Radio 3 towards the end of 1990, Palmer continued to defend the event against the criticism that the city's socialist traditions had received insufficient representation;

'Well I think all cities are extremely complex. I think it's difficult to simplify...What we're dealing with is a complex issue taking to do with urban cultures which are sometimes driven by class or cultural history or social action, but also driven by personal interest. I find that in just planning the programme for this year alongside 3000 other people who've joined me in this epic, we couldn't make these gross assumptions about class and interests, particularly in a cultural sense...I mean it really is extremely complex...Cities are made up of people and people are made up of their own individual experiences which are very, very different. We have immigrants, we have Asians, we have Religions with their own beliefs who have lived here for the last two generations or more and who feel part of Glasgow. Glasgow is a growing, dynamic, changing, international city, and although one needs to respect the socialist traditions of the past, one cannot forget that we live in a dynamic changing world...We have to look to the future.'

(Bob Palmer Third Ear Radio 3 3/10/90)

Two themes emerge as particularly significant from these quotes. First, Glasgow's radical socialist culture is suggested to be part of the city's past. The city is changing

and so too are its cultural needs. Glasgow is positioned in a dynamic world and to retain notions of 'Red Clydeside' is to fail to keep up with the pace of change. One needs to look forward to new cultural foundations, not backwards to the 'olden days'.

Secondly, in trying to characterise this new genre, reference is made by Palmer to its complexity. The new era is characterised by a plurality of cultures. It is too simplistic to regard the city as comprised only of a socialist inspired culture. The city is divided around a whole series of axes, and indeed aspirations are so individualistic that to talk of a *Glasgow culture* as such, is to gloss over great diversity. Whilst traditionally a class based culture might have been dominant, contemporary culture is best characterised as highly fractured.

9.7 Summary

Officials throughout 1990 therefore, were active in formulating a defence against criticisms of the cultural substance of the event. In the first instance, the allegation that the event represented an exercise in 'high culture' was dismissed as inaccurate. A broad definition of 'culture' was being used. Glasgow's indigenous culture provided the main focus of the event. To the extent that people believed that the event involved only 'opera and ballet', the media were to be blamed for painting a biased picture.

This general argument was shown to have been developed through reference to the mechanics of the funding of the event. Organisers were said to be passive, 'enabling' energies which stemmed from the community to flourish. The City of Culture event was 'co-authored' by the people of Glasgow. Responding specifically to the Workers City critique, it was suggested that the economic uses to which the event was being put had no effect upon its cultural content. The political and economic context of 1990 did not interfere with the integrity of artists and the choice of events.

To this end, links between 1990 and economic regeneration were accounted for in ways which did not compromise the idea that the event was *culturally motivated*. First, a good cultural event run on its own merits, would improve the city's image and develop a local culture conducive to economic revival. The economic benefits were however, largely co-incidental. Secondly, the rhetoric of regeneration was suggested to be nothing more than a vehicle for justifying the particularly high cost elements of the event.

Responding to the criticism that the city's socialist history had not been given sufficient representation in the event, officials argued that whilst the socialist heritage was to be respected, it was somewhat 'dated'. The current culture of the city was marked by complexity and heterogeneity. Glasgow was a changing city and its changing culture had to be appreciated.

CHAPTER 10 - DEVOLVING DECISION MAKING POWER DOWN TO THE COMMUNITY LEVEL : THREE CITY OF CULTURE PROJECTS

10.1 Introduction

Three City of Culture projects are examined in some detail in this chapter, in a bid to shed further light on the Cultural Debate. In Chapter 5, it was pointed out that a total of fifteen groups that had become involved in the City of Culture event were interviewed. In examining three particular projects here, five of these group interviews will be drawn upon.

The main aim of the chapter is to provide more detailed insight into the official account of the cultural substance of the event. Sean Taylor's residency at Woodlands Trust (section 10.2), and the Glasgow's Milestones project (section 10.3) will be examined to this end. These represent projects which were keen to suggest that *their* activities reflected Glasgow's 'real' culture since they had self consciously set out to devolve decision making power down to community level.

Attention will also be given however, in section 10.4, to a group situated somewhat ambiguously between the official account and that put forward by the critics. The Easthall Theatre Group was in many ways a paradigm example of the official account in practice. Nevertheless, it developed an antagonistic relationship with council officials

during 1990. As such, its contribution to the 'whose culture' debate represents one of the most sophisticated.

10.2 Sean Taylor and the Woodlands Trust

The Woodlands Trust is a community organisation set up by residents of the Woodlands area in the city's West End. The Trust's primary roles are the modernisation of local houses and the provision of transport for the elderly and infirm. The Trust, whilst run on a largely voluntary basis, receives a formal grant from Strathclyde Regional Council.

In preparation for the City of Culture event, the Trust approached Strathclyde Regional Council, Glasgow District Council, and the Arts Council, with the view to securing funds to employ an Artist in Residence during 1990.

Some £12,000 was received from these three institutions and Irish artist, Sean Taylor, eventually appointed.

The following analysis is taken primarily from an interview with Taylor on 28/1/92. This interview took place in Taylor's room at the Woodlands Trust. Following the interview, Taylor talked through a number of works he had completed during 1990. These were stored in this room. The analysis is also informed by attendance at two of Taylor's projects. The first, on November 16th 1990, was called 'Jungle Stories' and is described in more detail below. It was largely as a consequence of this event that it was decided to study Taylor's residency in more detail. The second was a

photographic exhibition undertaken with the help of local school children, called 'Black and White', which ran at Ashley Street School in Woodlands between January 28th and February 1st 1991. It should be noted that the style of presentation adopted here involves more use of short quotations *embedded* in the text. Phrases put in inverted commas therefore, should be taken as direct quotes from the interviewee unless otherwise stated.

In seeking to examine the way Taylor rationalised about the cultural substance of his particular endeavour, discussion will be structured around two themes. First, attention will be given to Taylor's approach to community art in general. Second, this clears the path for an examination of the way he put this approach into practice in Woodlands in 1990.

Prior to arriving in Woodlands, Taylor was an artist and art teacher in various parts of Ireland, including Belfast. His experience of religious conflict in Belfast led him to question what he referred to as 'traditional community art'. Traditionally Taylor argued, Community Artists have been expected to produce a 'mural or sculpture' simply as a means of brightening up a place. The content of the mural was defined by the artist. They would then get 'local kids simply to paint around the design'. This he called the 'paint by number attitude'.

The problem with this approach Taylor argued, was that art became severed of from the community so that both the content ~~off~~ the work and its form (mural, sculpture etc),

were largely meaningless to locals. It is for this reason that community art has failed to generate significant levels of local involvement. Further, recognising the disillusion felt in Glasgow vis-à-vis the cultural substance of the event, he suggested that it had been the long tradition of this conventional approach which had produced so many negative reactions in Glasgow.

The conclusion reached from this analysis was that Community Artists needed to become more accountable. In developing this argument, Taylor suggested that the purpose of the Community Artist ought to be that of 'empowering' the community. Art should provide people with a 'means to a voice'. In taking this stance, Taylor recognised that the Community Artist had to become involved in local politics. His approach to art was a 'thoroughly political one'. It was only by becoming political that the artist could do something of real significance to the local community.

Taylor exemplified this point by recounting a conference he had recently attended in London. This conference was concerned with 'The Role of the Community Artist in the 1990s'. The bulk of artists who attended he argued, were of the 'traditional' mould. One spoke about a mural he had recently completed in Belfast. This mural involved a landscape of the surrounding countryside. Whilst noting that it was 'beautiful', Taylor suggested that he had doubts as to its value to the local community. When he pointed out that the murals which the community themselves

tended to produce were ones of 'IRA hunger strikers' or 'Union Jacks and the Red Hand of Ulster', the participants at the conference 'felt very uncomfortable'. 'They simply did not have a clue', Taylor argued, 'about what the community's interests were...They couldn't see past the idea that a nice mural to brighten the place up was just the job'.

Taylor's approach then, conceived of community art work as involving artists 'serving' the local community. Artists had to understand what the important issues in the community were, and had to endeavour to help the community get its point of view across on these issues. Artists in Residence, had to become 'political agents of the community'. When put in these terms, the criticism that his particular project had passed the community by could be averted. Whilst this might have been the case with 'traditional art', Taylor's work could not be criticised for being 'meaningless' to the local community.

It was with this philosophy that Taylor approached the job at the Woodlands Trust. Two aspects of his work will be examined here. First, Taylor offered an interesting account of how he approached the job when he first arrived. Given his broad philosophy, his task was to find out what issues the community thought were important. To do this he argued, he had to gain the confidence of locals.

It was ironically the difficulties he encountered in

trying to gain local acceptance that brought an awareness of the nature of local politics. The Woodlands area of Glasgow has high concentrations of ethnic minorities. In particular, Asians (Pakistani and Bengali) make up 70% of the population. Many of these are first generation immigrants.

In trying to 'penetrate into the community', Taylor had encountered 'great suspicion' from the Asian community. In coming to terms with this he identified a number of factors. First, most of the committees in the area (including Woodlands Trust) were controlled by Whites. These committees adopted a very 'patronising' attitude towards the Asian community Taylor suggested. Whilst 'pretending' to be interested in their problems, 'they rarely did anything of any practical use.' Second, the Asian community had been subjected to severe beatings and threats from the British National Party (BNP) which was suggested to be 'very active' in the area. Consequently, it was difficult for them to trust any White.

In trying to gain the confidence of the Asians, Taylor resorted to two tactics. First, he emphasised that like them, he too was an immigrant. He came from Ireland and spoke with an Irish accent. Therefore, he had suffered many of the problems they faced. Second, he concentrated upon working with local school children. The children would return home and tell their parents. Once they had seen what he was 'up to', they would have some basis to trust him. The result of these efforts was that he slowly managed to integrate himself

into the community;

'They now think of me as a fellow ethnic. I just drop into their house for a cup of tea and if the door is lying open I just walk in kind of thing...and they do the same here, just come up whenever they feel like it and we talk away about what they've been doing and how they are feeling.'

The second aspect of Taylor's residence which is of interest in this context, is the type of activities he initiated once he had gained an understanding of the local political scene. Three examples will be cited here. First, Taylor designed a series of banners which were built to be carried through the streets of Woodlands during important Asian Festivals. The message contained in these banners was 'authored' by the local community. Seven banners in total were completed. In the course of the interview, Taylor talked through one in particular. This banner was designed to convey the message that whilst the police pay 'lip service' to racial violence and the operation of the BNP in Woodlands, they rarely prosecuted offenders. Taylor describes the banner as follows;

'here is the 'pig masters', our so called local police men. They're only paying lip service to anti-racism...they set up monitoring groups but yet they're slow to prosecute people who incite racial hatred. This guy holding the flag here is called Bert Brand. He was one of the main people in the BNP in Glasgow until he was chased out of the country, he's now in hiding in Switzerland... He really is an extreme character. He used to organise action groups to go around Glasgow beating people up and petrol bombing people's doors. He's a nasty piece of work and every Asian in Woodlands lives in fear of him. So this is Brand, terrorising the community and the police doing nothing whatsoever to stop it.'

Second, Taylor described how children had approached him

wanting to do a painting on an anti-racist theme. He discussed the matter with them and produced a project called 'Jungle Stories'. This involved taking film footage of BNP members along to the Winter Gardens in Glasgow. Images of the BNP were then projected onto large plants in the Winter Gardens. The question which this event raised was whether 'we want to live in a jungle with the 'animals' of the BNP, or whether, as a community, we want to do something about racism. Using the phrase 'us' in a significant way, Taylor summarised;

'We did this slide show called 'Jungle Stories' in the Winter Gardens, and what we were really trying to show was Glasgow as it affects us, what it means to us. And what we did was screen films of the BNP on 'highjack marches', and racist literature produced by the BNP, onto the plants, and we had backing tracks playing the jungle sounds..so it was like, who are the animals..and it was great, it was a really sharp message and it got everyone in Woodlands talking.'

Finally, on a more general theme, Taylor noted that when he first took up the post, the issue of the Poll Tax was an important one locally. Many Asians complained that they simply could not afford to pay the Poll Tax. In response to this, Taylor built a 'huge Wicker Man, twenty five feet tall'. Poll Tax forms were then attached to this man. In a park in Central Woodlands, Taylor then set the Wicker Man and the Poll Tax forms on fire. This was 'great', Taylor suggested;

'because it was something everyone wanted to do and it got something that had been getting to them right out of their system.'

Therefore, Sean Taylor's residence at the Woodlands Trust represents an excellent case example of the argument Glasgow District Council used during 1990. Instead of forcing upon the Woodlands community a type of culture which was not meaningful to them, art was used to provide the local Asian community with a means to a critical voice. Taylor's role was that of 'enabling' the local community to say what they wanted on important local issues. The value system used to evaluate expenditure was rooted in the degree of success Taylor had in integrating into the community and helping them to articulate *their* views.

10.3 The Glasgow's Milestones Project

The Glasgow's Milestones Project provides a second example of the way the official account of the City of Culture event worked its way into practice. The project was conceived by Glasgow Sculpture Studios. Part of the job of the Sculpture Studios is to stimulate work for sculptors. At any one point in time, it holds a list of sculptors who are available for work. Clients generally approach the studios and are put in touch with a sculptor most suitable for the particular task required. On occasions however, the studios engage in business development programmes.

During 1990, the main business development tactic used was the Glasgow's Milestones project. This project involved encouraging community groups to commission a sculpture

as part of their celebration of Glasgow 1990. These would act as 'Milestones' for the communities. The role of Glasgow Sculpture Studios was to be three fold. First, to bring sculptors and community groups together. Second, to research sources of finance for the Milestone. Third, to guide the community group through the commissioning process.

The following discussion draws upon four major sources of information. First, an interview with the Director of the project, Gail Boarden. This took place in Edinburgh on September 28th 1990. Second, an interview with the Drumchapel Community Organisations Council on October 22nd 1990 in Drumchapel. Third, attendance at a public meeting in Partick Library on January 29th 1990. The relevance of these latter two sources will be revealed later. Finally, frequent subsequent correspondence with Gail Boarden for up-dated information on the project.

What is interesting about the project, from the point of view of this thesis, is the general philosophy of Glasgow Sculpture Studios. Demand for Sculptures would only 'pick up' Boarden argued, if sculptures were shown to be 'immediately relevant to the community' in which they are located. It is pointless imposing a piece upon an area. This would only serve to disillusion people and bring sculpting per se into *disrepute*. Sculptors therefore, had to temper their own interests by putting the needs of the client first.

In the case of the Glasgow's Milestones project, what this meant was that the meaning of the various Milestones was to be defined first and foremost by the various local communities in question. The role of Glasgow Sculpture Studios became that of helping the communities to articulate their interests to Sculptors and ensuring that Sculptors were complying. Boarden, stated thus;

'Fundamental to the Milestones concept is the dominant community and the passive artist. The Milestones will reflect exactly what the local community wants. At no stage will the sculptor decide what should or should not happen...They are there to listen and our role is to ensure that they've no hearing difficulties.'

To ensure that sculptures were meaningful to the local community, Boarden set down five principles for the commissioning process. No commitment would be required and groups could pull out of the process at any stage. First, in the early stages, the Sculpture Studios would hold regular meetings with local community groups. The purpose of these meetings was to help community organisations clarify what type of sculpture they wanted. Second, the Sculpture Studios would provide community organisations with a list of sculptors capable of doing the work. A short list of three would be selected. The background of the sculptors would be pointed out, however, the choice would be left to the community.

Third, the three Sculptors shortlisted would then be asked to spend a period of time in the community. They would hold meetings with the community groups involved and meet

locals in more informal ways. At the end of this period, a small scale version of the sculpture would be produced. This phase was to be paid directly by the City of Culture Festivals Office. In the end it amounted to some £4,000.

Fourth, the three small scale sculptures would be put in public display for a period of two weeks. A suggestions box would be made available next to each sculpture. Further, a public meeting would be held at the end of the period when all members of the community could come together and discuss the merits of each of the sculptures. Glasgow Sculpture Studios would organise this meeting. The Head of the Department of Environmental Art at Glasgow Art School, David Harding, would also attend in an advisory capacity.

Finally, at the conclusion of this period of public scrutiny, one sculptor would be commissioned to do the final Milestone. The criticisms put forward during the fourth phase would be typed up and adjustments to the small scale version made. Sculptors would have to work in Glasgow, preferably in the community, whilst completing the work. Access to the Milestone would be given to locals right up until the completion point and all late suggestions taken seriously.

One sees in this five stage approach, a substantial concern on the behalf of the Sculpture Studios, to ensure that decision making is controlled by the community group and not the artist. The process is judged at all stages according to the degree of local accountability. The

result is that the local community secures from the deal precisely what it wants.

Five community based coalitions took part in the project. These were; the Drumchapel Community Organisations Council, Dennistoun Community Council, Woodlands 1990 Festival Committee, the Partick Coalition, and the Govan Initiative. As noted above, two of these, the Drumchapel Community Organisations Council, and the Partick Coalition, were researched further. In seeking to highlight some of the ways in which the Sculpture Studios' philosophy transferred into practice, it is useful to consider these two groups in more detail.

The Drumchapel Community Organisations Council (DCOC) was founded in the context of a community regeneration initiative undertaken by Glasgow District Council and Strathclyde Regional Council called *The Drumchapel Initiative*. Drumchapel is one of Glasgow's largest peripheral housing estates, and is noted for its high levels of unemployment and poor housing. The Drumchapel Initiative sought to combat both problems.

A key feature of the initiative was that local groups were allowed access to the decision making processes. Some eighty local groups were involved in the early phases. Through time however, community organisations increasingly demanded not only access to decision making structures but control over them. In 1988, this led to the emergence of

the DCOC. Funded by Urban Aid grants (to the value of £417,000 in 1990), the DCOC is comprised of local volunteers and locally elected employees. At present, the DCOC has some 47 full-time workers.

In 1989, the DCOC established an Arts Initiative called 'Senses Alive'. This was in recognition of the role the arts can play in the social as well as economic regeneration of an area. To date, 'Senses Alive' has resulted in the establishment of a local radio station, the conversion of a local hotel to a theatre, and the employment of an Artist in Residence. The DCOC *launched* 'Senses Alive' however, through the Glasgow's Milestones project.

In examining the way DCOC approached Glasgow's Milestones, it is necessary to understand the drive within the organisation towards self control. It has been noted that the DCOC was set up primarily to allow local groups more decision making autonomy. This urge towards self control manifested itself in Glasgow's Milestones. The organisation became involved, it was argued, primarily because the project offered them a chance to learn how to commission a sculpture. The commission process set out by Glasgow Sculpture Studios was attractive because it allowed community organisations to learn the mechanics of commissioning. By gaining more skill and knowledge about a process which could be put to use at a later date, the goal of increasing self control could be realised.

The following quotes, offered by the Assistant Director of

the DCOC and the head of the Senses Alive project, exemplify this line of thought:

'What's been vital in Glasgow's Milestones from our point of view is that we've taken part in a process. If you look at each element of our involvement you'll see a process...We've looked at artists, we've worked down a list of a hundred to three, we've interviewed all three and seen their work, we've negotiated with them as to what we want, we've decided on a piece...So we've evolved through a learning process and we've been careful to make sure we know exactly what is happening at each stage...So we're now in a position of being able to stand in front of experts and say we want this piece and why. Now, that might not seem much but for us that is very, very sacred. It means that we're learning we're improving. We are no longer ignorant so that people can force sculptures on us. No one can impose anything on us because we know exactly what we're doing.'

'The question you must ask about the 1990 programme is whether or not when you come back in 1991 anything has been learned. What do we know now that we didn't know then. And for us, we'll know how to commission a sculpture so that 'know how' will be written up for future reference. We will also know how the community feels about the sculpture. How successful have we been? And that feedback will be very carefully monitored. The Milestone is a test bed for Senses Alive in that regard. So I think you'll agree that there is a logic to what we're doing. We're equipping ourself and building up a fund of expertise within the community which makes us better able to control our lives and determine our future which is what this really is all about.'

For the DCOC then, the Milestones project offered a means to gain independence. By learning the rules of commissioning, it would be in a position to determine the cultural substance of future sculptures. What was vital in the project was the acquisition of knowledge about the mechanics of the commissioning process. The Milestones philosophy of moving power away from the artist and towards the community therefore, worked itself into the practice of the group. In early 1991, the DCOC eventually received its completed Milestone.

The Partick Coalition was led by the Partick Housing Association. This is a District Council body responsible for the up-keep of council houses in the Partick area. Along with two other community organisations, Partick Housing Association approached Glasgow's Sculpture Studios in late 1989 and officially joined the Milestones project in January 1989.

The following analysis refers to a public meeting held at Partick Library on January 29th 1991. At that juncture, the Coalition had reached stage four in the commissioning process. Three artists had been chosen. Their 'small scale' Milestones had been publicly displayed in Partick Library for over two weeks. The public meeting in question represented the point at which the public were invited to pass their comments before a final judgement was made. Representatives of the three organisations, Gail Boarden and David Harding of Glasgow Art School were in attendance.

Whilst many aspects of this meeting proved interesting, two points in particular were recognised as significant. First, the period of public consultation had proven to be disappointing. Only one member of the general public had turned up at the meeting. Further, only 24 comments sheets had been placed in the suggestion box accompanying the three scaled down Milestones. The three organisations expressed regret at this fact. In the absence of strong local involvement they said, they stood to be

criticised if they chose a Milestone which the community did not like. The problem then, was seen as one of local accountability.

In an attempt to synthesise the various discussions taking place Boarden began to play an active role. She suggested that the group make use of the 24 replies that they did have, and learn from the experience of the public meeting. The group subsequently spoke for one hour on the replies which they had received. Further, they identified a number of reasons why the turn out had been so poor. First, they noted that Tuesday nights (the night the meeting was held) has traditionally been the night Partick workers do overtime. Second, they observed that a large number of community events had taken place in the weeks preceeding the meeting. Perhaps people had become weary of community activity. Third, they noted that the leaflet advertising the meeting had not been particularly well distributed.

Having identified these causes, it was decided to hold another meeting at a later juncture. This would take place on a Monday night at a time when community activity was lower. Further 'proper leaflets' would be drawn up, and the meeting advertised in the local press

The second aspect of the meeting worth noting was that many of the 24 replies in the suggestion box were critical of the proposed Milestones on display. The most common complaint was that none of the Sculptures made a statement which was meaningful to the local community. This was a

sentiment shared by the three organisations. A number of people complained that the artists had spent too little time in the area prior to designing the model. One participant suggested for instance;

'How could they possibly know, for christ sake, anything about Partick. They only stayed up here for three days if you're lucky, and most of that was walking around and not talking to folk. I mean I don't rate any of those designs... They've got a bloody cheek handing that in. I could have got my ween to do that.'

On this basis, the Coalition suggested that they should refuse to pay any of the Sculptors for work done to that point. At this juncture, Gail Boarden once more entered the discussion and suggested that since the work had been completed it was not appropriate to refuse payment. Nevertheless, she suggested that the group ought to put together a letter of reply to each of the artists explaining to them the discontent felt and asking them for a re-submission. The group agreed to this and draft forms of the letters were discussed.

What is significant about these two points is that they highlight the role played by Gail Boarden as a mediator between the the community and the Sculptor. Boarden was keen to avoid imposing ideas on the group. However, in both cases, one can see her encouraging the group to channel their energies in as productive a way as possible. In the meeting, Boarden managed to get groups to clarify points of view and decide upon strategies of action. She played the role of 'enabler'.

Further what is interesting about both cases is that the issue involved in both was the local accountability of the commission. In the case of the first, increased public participation would make the choice of a Milestone more legitimate. In the case of the second, the feedback given to the Sculptors would encourage them to do something more appropriate from the the local community's point of view.

Unfortunately, due to the withdrawal of the Partick Housing Association and the disillusionment with the small scale models, the Partick Coalition withdrew from the process and no Milestone was ever placed. The ability of groups to withdraw even at the last minute was one further example of the power community organisations were given in the commissioning process.

In summary, the Glasgow's Milestones project constituted a manifestation of the accounts of the City of Culture event officials of the year were putting forward. In the case of the Milestones project, communities were given tuition in the mechanics of commissioning a piece of sculpture. A rigorous commissioning process was drawn up by Glasgow Sculpture Studios which was designed to delegate decision making power away from the artist and towards the community. For the Drumchapel Community Organisations Council, this acquisition of a new skill and thus power was a source of celebration. It fitted with their general ambition of self determination. In

the case of the Partick Coalition, some of the benefits of the project were demonstrated. The group were assisted in their negotiations with sculptors and their efforts to secure local accountability.

10.4 The Easthall Theatre Group.

The Easthall Theatre Group is an offshoot of the Easthall Residents Association. This latter organisation is located in the Easterhouse area of Glasgow. In 1984, it launched an 'anti-dampness' campaign in a bid to highlight the pervasive problems of damp housing in Easterhouse, and to lobby Glasgow District Council for financial assistance. Up until 1990, this campaign took the form of direct interaction with the council. Despite resistance from some council officials, the group managed to secure some £1.3 million from the District Council and the EEC. This has been spent on a pilot Solar energy campaign designed to use natural resources to cure dampness. For this, they have become widely known as an expert 'pressure' group (see Pallister 1990d). Indeed, the Association regularly receives field trips from Sociological Departments across the United Kingdom.

In preparation for the City of Culture event, however, the Association established the Easthall Theatre Group. This group was to constitute a new means through which they could lobby for council funds. Receiving some £6,000 from the Year of Culture budget, a play called 'Dampbusters' was written.

Initially, this play ran for eight nights in September 1990. By popular demand however, it was extended to an additional seven nights in November 1990. The following analysis is based on an interview conducted with the group on October 9th 1990, and attendance at the play, at the Kingsridge Community Centre in Drumchapel on September 20th 1990.

The Easthall Theatre group represents, in many ways, a paradigm example of the official account in practice. First and foremost, the play was conceived and written by local residents. This was often done at Friday morning coffee meetings, by local women. Whilst professional playwrights did help in later stages, this was only to assist the group to get *its* message across. Decision making power vis-à-vis the cultural content of the project was located firmly with the local community. This is hardly surprising given that the play was designed to provide the group with a means to a voice.

The implication of this, in particular, was that the group could freely criticise the council. Three objectives of the play were defined to this end. First, the council's resistance to the group stemmed from their claim that the cause of damp housing was the behaviour of residents. Invariably, residents had been criticised for boiling the kettle too often, and engaging in excessive sexual behaviour, thereby emitting too much sweat. A line constantly repeated by an 'arrogant councillor' in the play, consequently was;

'It just goes to show how many tenants bring these problems upon themselves.'

('Dampbusters' Kingsridge Community Centre 20/9/90)

The first objective of the play was to show that this was a 'conspiracy', designed to conceal the truth. The reason for damp housing lay in the poor way houses in peripheral estates had been constructed. The reason for the conspiracy was that by blaming 'individuals', responsibility for the problem could be removed from the public realm.

Second, the play was written with the intention of making public, the health problems associated with damp housing.. One of the interviewees invited me to look around her house in this regard. This experience was most sobering. The house was covered in green mould, especially the kitchen. Further, the house was extremely cold. The interviewee had two children. Both suffered frequent colds. One also had had three bouts of Thrush which would not fully clear up because of the persistency of the dampness in the house. These problems were captured in the play and at a personal level continue to leave an impression.

The third objective of the play sought to criticise the District Council. Having made the problem clear, the question posed was; 'why are the council not doing anything to help?' Specifically, the council's expenditure on the City of Culture was ridiculed throughout the play. How could the council justify spending money on this event when

so many other pressing problems needed attended to?

The council seemed to care more about creating a 'tourist culture' than curing dampness;

'Our argument is that we wish to God that the City Fathers would use the same energy, determination and initiative to secure the funds to do something seriously about housing problems. They cannae even find the will let alone anything else. I mean, if they used the same energy, by God they could do something about it.'

(Easthall Theatre Group, Field Interview 9/10/90).

The play therefore, provided the group with a means of expressing dissent against the council. The group could say what *it* wanted. In addition to this, there existed substantial evidence in the interview that enormous benefits were gained by the group from doing so. These benefits were more 'psychological' than tangible. The play had become central to the lives of the participants. It was something which they found highly emotional. By allowing them to 'speak' about a problem which affected them in an intimate way, the group found the play 'liberating'.

As an indication of the centrality of the play to the lives of the participants, it is useful to refer to one particularly poignant story. A member of the group recalled how she had been 'absolutely ill with nerves' on the day of the first performance. Having being asked if this was because she had never acted before, she replied;

'No, it wasn't anything to do with the acting. I think it was just that we had a goal and that goal had materialised and it was starting that day and it was the shock. You know, I can't believe this is happening. I

can't believe we've actually done it. We've all done it. You know what I mean.'

(Easthall Theatre Group, Field Interview 9/10/90).

The group also talked about the effect of the play on the local community. It had raised 'spirits' it was suggested, and everyone now wanted to do something about dampness. People no longer felt impotent. At the end of one performance a member of the group recounted;

'This wee wifie came up to me and said to me, 'good for you hen', you stick up for your rights. If you need my help just say the word.'... You know, we nearly started a revolution.'

(Easthall Theatre Group, Field Interview 9/10/90).

At first sight therefore, Dampbusters would appear to constitute a perfect example of the official account in practice. The cultural content of the project was defined by locals and indeed involved criticism of the council itself. Further, the value of theatre in improving the 'spirit' of a community, by providing its members with a means to a critical voice, is clearly in evidence.

Nevertheless, in seeking to position themselves within the wider context of the event, members of the group were keen to distance themselves from the City of Culture event. The rationale for the event was recognised to be the economic regeneration of the city. The main thrust of the event was to produce a 'yuppie' culture in the City Centre it was argued;

'The City of Culture is all about trying to create a kind of 'tourist', 'yuppie' culture in the Merchant City. It's

all about trying to change the image of Glasgow. To say look at Glasgow everyone, look how nice it is, there's lots of things to do here. But its nothing to do with the real culture of this city.'

(Easthall Theatre Group, Field Interview 9/10/90).

Given this, their play represented an *exception* to the rule. It was not representative of the wider event. Further, it was not to be interpreted as justification of the official account.

This confrontation between 'Dampbusters' and the wider event was brought to the forefront in September 1990. An Evening Times article compiled by local journalist Marian Pallister (Pallister 1990b) set out to dismiss the idea that the City of Culture event had not 'touched' the ordinary Glaswegian. The reason for Pallister's report will be considered more fully in the next chapter. It nevertheless used the 'Dampbusters' project as a key example of the way the City of Culture event had managed to work itself down into grass roots Glasgow.

This article generated anger among members of Easthall Theatre Group. In the field interview, the matter was raised by the group themselves. It was pointed out:

'We were really, really disappointed in the media. We spent an absolute fortune on the publicity. Right. And we thought that because it was fairly controversial, it would get picked up in the press, but what happened was that the Evening Times killed it...I was angry. I was totally angry. I was angry. Because the things we were talking about were like, injustice, oppression, and how it all works in the council. But Pallister's article was like, Pat Lally you are justified. Critics, eat your words. You know, it was like the media didn't want to help us.'

(Easthall Theatre Group Field interview 9/10/90)

Whilst representing key aspects of the official argument therefore, the Easthall Theatre Group rationalised about the City of Culture event in general within the terms of reference of the critics. This somewhat ambiguous position led them to feel that they had been exploited by the media to justify the City of Culture event. The example of this group raises the issue of the merits of community groups becoming involved in events such as the City of Culture. By representing a small scale example of the wider arguments officials were using, the group left themselves open to being used to legitimate the wider case.

10.5 Summary

The aim of this chapter has been to examine particular City of Culture projects with a view to gaining more detailed insight into the arguments officials, and to a lesser extent critics, used in the course of the 'Whose Culture' debate. In the cases of Sean Taylor's residency at the Woodlands Trust, and the Easthall Theatre Group, it was shown how 'art' was used in some projects to empower community groups by offering them a means to a critical voice. Decision making power for the cultural content of these projects was held by the community's involved. Further, the Glasgow's Milestones Project was cited as an example of a project designed to give community groups the technical skills to control the cultural content of sculptures and thus to

overcome the problem of having certain forms of art imposed upon them from above.

The example of the Easthall Theatre Group was cited however, to highlight the problems which such groups can encounter. Whilst representing a localised instance of the official narrative, Easthall Theatre Group was keen to suggest that they were not typical of the overall programme. They followed Workers City in arguing that the City of Culture event involved a 'yuppified', 'tourist' culture. By participating in the event however, they left themselves open to 'exploitation'. Against their wishes, they were used to justify the official argument. This they claimed, had neutralised the very point of the play in the first instance.

CHAPTER 11 - ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES USED TO LEGITIMATE THE EVENT AGAINST CRITICISMS OF ITS CULTURAL SUBSTANCE

11.1 Introduction

Thus far, discussion has focussed upon the strategies officials used when justifying themselves against criticisms of the cultural substance of the event. The purpose of this chapter is to examine two alternative strategies which were used by some media commentators and project organisers.

First, in some instances, it was accepted that the type of culture that was celebrated was that which *critics* claimed was irrelevant to Glaswegians. The event nonetheless, was still legitimate it was argued, *as a cultural event*. The position of the Citizens Theatre, and a series of articles on the event published in the Evening Times, will be referred to here as examples of occasions when the event was justified as an exercise in 'high culture' (section 11.2). Further, Josefina Cupido's Residency at the Gorbals Unemployed Workers Centre will be used as a case study of instances when projects were justified within the terms of reference of the virtue of exploring the culture of 'others' (section 11.3).

The second strategy involved justifying the cultural substance of the event through the narrative of economic regeneration. This strategy accepted the Workers City

argument that the City of Culture 'culture' was 'valued' through the criteria of place marketing for economic development. It suggested however, that 'prostituting' local culture was legitimate if it meant more jobs for the city. An interview with a group not involved in the event, and material published by Socialist playwright John McGrath, will be drawn upon to clarify the basic tenets of this strategy (section 11.4).

11.2 The Citizens Theatre and Evening Times Series

The Citizens Theatre is jointly financed between Glasgow District Council, Strathclyde Regional Council, the Scottish Arts Council, and District Councils from surrounding areas. Directed by Playwriters Giles Havergal and Philip Prowse, both of international repute, the group both writes new material and *adapts* 'classical' plays. Whilst not putting on anything *specifically* for the City of Culture event, the Citizens Theatre received some £275,000 from the Glasgow District Council during 1990. This money was part of the normal grant given by the council and was used to finance seven plays.

The Citizens Theatre is widely regarded in the city as the home of 'high' culture. The 1990 performances included, George Bernard Shaw's *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, Nicholas Rowe's *Jane Shore*, and Luigi Pirandello's *Enrico Four*. The paradox of the Citizens Theatre however, is that it is

located in the Gorbals area of Glasgow. As noted in Chapter 4, this is the area in which the 'No Mean City' novel was set. Its reputation for violence and slum conditions survives to the present day. It comes as something of a surprise then, that a bastion of high culture is located in an area which is regarded as somewhat 'rough'.

This paradox provides the key however, to understanding how the Citizens Theatre negotiated the high culture/working class culture dichotomy during 1990. The following extracts are taken from an interview with Lorna Ferguson, Press Officer at the Citizens Theatre, on November 14th 1990. It is also informed by personal contact with the theatre prior to 1990.

During the interview, the apparent paradox of the theatre's location was raised. In her reply, Ferguson argued that so called 'high culture' was something which working class people enjoyed just as much as the middle classes. Classical plays were *classical* it was suggested, precisely because they referred to aspects of the 'human condition' which transcended class as well as other barriers. They were therefore, meaningful to working class people. Further, even to infer that a paradox in the location of the theatre existed was to insinuate that working class people were incapable of appreciating high culture. This was suggested to be a very 'patronising' attitude;

'If you come here any night, you'll see that the place is jam packed and if you trace where those people come from you'll find that we have people here from the Gorbals, Easterhouse, Drumchapel and what not... You know,

I was recently asked the same question by a reporter from the Sun and I said to him; who says that the man on the street doesn't like a Brecht or Sartre? You know, it's a very very patronising attitude and it doesn't do any justice to the people of Glasgow...You know, we are in the entertainment business but our performances also try to tell a story and people come here to learn, to go away knowing something about life, about relationships about whatever, that they didn't know when they arrived.'

(Lorna Ferguson Citizens Theatre 14/11/90)

To this end, it was pointed out that the theatre operated a pricing policy designed to make plays as accessible to the working classes as possible. First, ticket prices had not been raised since 1985. They stood at £3. Second, ticket prices for school children and students were one third of the adult price, that is £1. Finally, unemployed people and OAP's were given entry free of charge. As Ferguson explained;

'our whole policy is to make theatre available to everyone. No one should be denied the right to benefit from the tremendously uplifting experience of theatre because of money. We have often made a loss on a play just to make it accessible to people.'

(Lorna Ferguson Citizens Theatre 14/11/90)

The Citizens Theatre therefore, refused to accept that 'high culture' was largely alien to Glaswegians. This was an argument which they cast as 'patronising'. Working class Glaswegians *had* the ability to appreciate the works of great playwrights. They were keen to learn from these 'thinkers'. They had respect for classical works. They were just as 'cultured' as the middle classes. The standards of high culture were accepted therefore, and the case made that Glaswegians are not philistines.

This line of argument also provided the foundation for a series of articles published in the Evening Times in the week beginning September 3rd 1990. These articles were compiled by local journalist Marian Pallister. They focussed upon the contributions to the City of Culture event which were being made in four housing estates in Glasgow; Easterhouse, Castlemilk, Drumchapel and Cranhill. In order to understand the background to the series, an effort was made to interview Marian Pallister. This proved impossible; however, in a telephone conversation on November 11th 1990, Pallister did offer some useful comments. Her argument showed similarities with that used by the Citizens Theatre;

'I have been writing articles on Glasgow's estates for over ten years now, and for the most part the main theme was, you know, look at the problems these people face, what are we going to do about them...In talking to people from the estates, unlike many journalists I'm out there all the time and have many close friends on the estates, I became aware that, okay they appreciated me bringing attention to their problems, but they thought that they also had a lot to offer that no one really appreciated...And it came to 1990 and everyone was saying, culture what has that got to do with them, they know nothing about it...and so I thought it would be a good idea to show that the City of Culture event was appreciated on the estates, you know, that these people are not philistines.'

(Marian Pallister personal communication 11/11/90)

It is not surprising then, that quotes such as the following appeared throughout the published articles;

'People resent being patronisingly dismissed as having no interest beyond beer, fags and Coronation Street.'

(Marian Pallister Evening Times 3/9/90b p10)

'1990 means as much in Dougrie Road Castlemilk as it does in the Merchant City...John Dyer, a well known figure on the Drumchapel scene was given a £500 City of Culture grant to stage an exhibition of his photographs of local children. People like John have been angered to read the negative publicity the schemes are getting; 'we got free tickets for people to go to the Bolshoi and they loved it. One of the things we try to do in Drumchapel is break down barriers. The costs mean that people can't afford to go to see these things - it doesn't mean that they don't want to go and see them.''

(Marian Pallister Evening Times 5/9/90c p17)

Like the Citizens Theatre, Pallister suggested that it was 'patronising' to suggest that working class people have no interests beyond 'beer, fags, and Coronation Street.' The City of Culture event was to be defended against those who argued that Glaswegians could not appreciate culture. There was an assumption that 'culture' was something more sophisticated and refined in comparison with the people's interests. Nevertheless, the accusation that the people did not have the capacity nor inclination to raise their level of artistic appreciation was rejected. Glasgow's working classes were interested in the City of Culture event.

11.3 Josefina Cupido and the Drum Kitchen

An alternative line of argument within this first strategy is provided in Josefina Cupido's Residency. Josefina Cupido, a Spanish born musician, was appointed Artist in Residence at the Gorbals Unemployed Workers Centre in October 1989. This post was financed to the value of £9,000 by the City of Culture Festivals Office. The

following analysis is taken from an interview conducted with Cupido on October 17th 1990. It is also informed by attendance at one of Cupido's group practices and informal discussion with participants following this practice, on October 13th 1990.

The Gorbals Unemployed Workers Centre is one of eight Unemployed Workers Centres in Glasgow. These centres are financed through Urban Aid Grants from the Scottish Office, administered through Glasgow District Council. They have three main purposes; to create local employment opportunities, to provide welfare rights advice, and to develop recreational facilities for people out of work. It was with respect to this third objective that Cupido was invited to take up the residency. In coming to terms with the way Cupido approached debates about the cultural substance of the City of Culture event, it is necessary to consider her philosophy on music in general, and her career background.

Cupido's expertise is in drums and hand percussion. She consequently named her residency, the 'Drum Kitchen'. Based in London in the early 1980s, Cupido formed part of an all women band called 'Guest Stars'. She describes this period as 'uncreative and stifling; we were just turning out cover versions of the pops and classical jazz numbers'. Failure to secure a record contract and disillusionment with 'prostituting my music for a quick buck', led Cupido to embark upon a new career strategy in the late 1980s.

She decided first to move from London, the 'capital of commercial music'. This she regarded as symbolic; 'when I moved out of London it was like I was giving the two fingers to that style of music making, *officially*'. Inspired by the work of internationally renowned musician Paul Simon, she embarked upon an exploration of the music of ethnic minorities, in particular Brazilian, South African, and Ghanaian. This was something she had always wanted to do but had never been able to because of career worries. Her key interest in this regard was;

'the interrelationships which exist between music and community, what role music plays in the social fabric of different communities and what status musicians and different musical instruments have.'

(Josefina Cupido Gorbals Unemployed Workers Centre 17/10/90)

The concept of authenticity was frequently invoked by Cupido when talking about this career shift. Whilst 'commercial music' was suggested to be a 'prostitution of music', her exploration of the music of ethnic minorities was 'genuine'. If nothing else, she would keep her integrity as a musician;

'What's important for me is the genuine feelings and I know it sounds poncey but to me it's important to believe in what you do, d'you know what I mean. Integrity is something which is pretty scarce in music and I know that I have integrity as a musician and as a music worker.'

(Josefina Cupido Gorbals Unemployed Workers Centre 17/10/90)

In addition to authenticity, Cupido was keen to suggest that this turn towards the music of ethnic minorities was

'pioneering' in spirit. She constantly referred to it as a 'journey into the unknown'. Further, she suggested that;

'it requires a bit of an imagination to learn the music of others, you know, you've got to put all your preconceptions to one side and learn *how* to learn.'

(Josefina Cupido Gorbals Unemployed Workers Centre 17/10/90)

The idea of the 'unconstrained thinker', prepared to respect and learn from 'other cultures', also appeared in discussion about her reasons for taking up the post in the Gorbals in the first place. The reputation of the Gorbals has already been noted. Cupido joked that when she told friends she was taking up the post, 'they thought that I had lost my marbles you know, what d'you want to go there for, have you not heard what it's like.' She suggested that such sentiments did not put her off but instead added to the sense of challenge. She was prepared to 'give it a go'.

Cupido approached the residence therefore, as an advocate of exploring the music of other cultures. Such exploration was defined as being more 'authentic' than the career of the commercial musician. Further, it made a statement about the type of person concerned. They were not 'clones' but had the capacity to respect and show interest in music outwith the scope of the conventional commercial variety. They were liberal thinkers, open to change.

These arguments all appear in Cupido's account of what the Drum Kitchen meant to local people in the Gorbals. Cupido's task was to educate locals on the rudiments of the percussion instruments. She achieved this through group sessions and

individual tuition at the Unemployed Workers Centre, and 'outreach' work at local schools. With respect to the former, over thirty pupils received weekly lessons throughout the year. Cupido also established a Performance Group. This played at local gala days and other local events.

Central to Cupido's residence was the introduction of an appreciation of the music of ethnic minorities into the Gorbals area. Classes examined various instruments from countries such as Brazil and Mozambique. Further, they were encouraged to question the way the rhythm and meaning of certain songs reflected the lifestyles prevalent in other communities. To assist this process, Cupido used her contacts to bring across groups from Brazil and Mozambique. These groups both tutored at the Unemployed Workers Centre, and played with the Performance Group at public events.

The Drum Kitchen therefore, represented an attempt by Cupido to encourage others to explore alternative musical traditions. In this, Cupido fully recognised that the type of culture she was offering was largely alien to working class Glasgow. In contrast to Workers City however, whom she specifically mentioned, Cupido was keen to point out that whilst the Drum Kitchen did not represent culture organic to the city, it did not involve a 'commercial' driven alternative. At this point she returned to the theme of 'authenticity'. Her concerns were to remain faithful to the music of ethnic minorities. The type of culture she was introducing into the Gorbals

might not have been 'authentic' Gorbals culture, but it nevertheless was 'authentic';

'There's a neat saying that Gorbals folk use... If something is not quite genuine they say, that's not the 'full shilling' you know, meaning that it's flawed...my principle has always been to do justice to the music I study, to give the people of the Gorbals the 'full shilling'.'

(Josefina Cupido Gorbals Unemployed Workers Centre 17/10/90)

Moreover, drawing upon the notion that exploring alternative cultures represented an extension of the horizons of the mind, she suggested that introducing new forms of culture was legitimate because it gave people a chance to do things which they might not otherwise have had. The City of Culture event represented a unique *opportunity* for people to gain new experiences and to learn about cultures different from their own. This was defined as a good thing since being exposed to *difference* was in itself something of intrinsic merit;

'The cynics will say that Glasgow 1990 means nothing, all it means is people finding a new way of shifting money around the world. On the other hand, I think that some extraordinary things have happened as a consequence of the City of Culture and I would like every city to have its Year of Culture... What it means is that people have had more choice so that they can say oh yeah, I've never thought about that before, I might give that a try... What I'm trying to achieve is to make things available to people who, for various reasons have maybe not had the chance to see whether they might like to be involved in different types of music before. And people in the Gorbals are getting that chance for free and that's absolutely extraordinary.'

(Josefina Cupido Gorbals Unemployed Workers Centre 17/10/90)

In the case of the Drum Kitchen therefore, it was acknowledged that Glasgow culture was not being celebrated.

Instead, musical traditions among ethnic minorities were the centre of attention. In contrast to Workers City, Cupido argued that more 'commercial' forms of culture were precisely what were being avoided at the Drum Kitchen. Commercial music represented a 'prostitution of music'. As part of her career change, accounted for in terms of the degree of authenticity and integrity she wanted to retain, the Drum Kitchen constituted an attempt to do justice and pay respect to alternative musical forms. To introduce the music of ethnic minorities into the Gorbals was a legitimate exercise because it expanded choice and opportunity. It was good to learn about the culture of others since this represented a form of self enlargement.

11.4 Defending the cultural substance of the event through the narrative of economic regeneration.

In this final section, attention turns to a second strategy which was drawn upon by some commentators to justify the cultural substance of the event. Some accounts of the City of Culture event defended its cultural content in the terms of reference of the narrative of economic regeneration. The main tenets of this narrative, as it was articulated by officials, have already been outlined in chapter 6. In seeking to examine the way it was deployed in the present context, it is useful to begin with the interview conducted with the Railwaymen (Appendix 1). It will be recalled from chapter 7, that this interview was one of three conducted with people not involved in the City of Culture

event.

In this interview, discussion focussed upon the cultural substance of the event and how the City of Culture event had little relevance to the 'ordinary' Glaswegian. At this juncture, one of the participants pointed out;

'I mean it's obvious that there is nothing for the rank and file in this thing, I mean you take that for granted. But if you look at it, it's largely I think I'm right in saying, part of Glasgow's campaign to update its image. Now I'm not sure how successful it's been in doing that and maybe that's what we should be talking about.'

(Railwaymen Fieldwork Interview 10/10/90)

This represented an important turning point in the discussion since it raised the issue of the terms of reference within which the event was being evaluated. The group were forced to think about the event in terms of image building rather than simply as a cultural event per se.

The following series of quotes are taken from the ensuing discussion:

1. 'The question I want to put is, has anybody consulted the real Glasgow punter and asked him if he wanted his image changed.'

2. 'Do you need to consult him?'

1. 'Well surely to God if you're going to change a man's image you ask him what his opinion is.'

2. 'I agree, but I suppose it would be a fair statement to say that we live in a world where people think that we're all hard men, the No Mean City thing, running around beating up our wife and killing each other just because we happen to support different football teams. Now, I don't think you really need to go to people and say we want to do

something about this, what d'you think of that?'

1. 'You're talking like a dictator now John. I mean, that's dictatorship, telling people what they want.'

Interviewer 'Maybe the issue is that you don't need to consult people to ask them *if* they want their image changed, but you do to find out what *type* of new image they want.'

1. 'Aye that's a point, I mean the City of Culture says nothing about Glaswegians. I mean it's one thing to say that you need to tell everybody that Glasgow is no more violent than Birmingham or Liverpool, but it's another thing altogether to make up things about the place.'

2. 'Oh well obviously we *know* that the new image is false ...we don't believe in it, it's 75% fiction and 25% reality, that's just the nature of an image, that to me is what an image is. But if you're going to have an image you'd be as well having a flattering image as an unflattering one. At the end of the day, if it brings in money to the city and changes the way people think of us then surely it's beneficial.'

(Railwaymen Fieldwork Interview 10/10/90)

Two themes of significance appear in this strip of conversation. First, interviewee 2 makes the case that so bad was Glasgow's image that the council was right to try to change it without consulting the public first. This was challenged by interviewee 1 who suggested that justifying taking action without consultation was tantamount to 'dictatorship'.

Second, in a bid to resolve the conflict generated therein, the interviewer suggested that perhaps consultation was only necessary over the *content* of the new image. This was accepted by interviewee 1 who suggested that the cultural substance of the event reflected nothing of the 'real Glasgow'. Interviewee 2 however, argued that it was in the very nature of image building that the image created

was 'flattering'. This was legitimate he reasoned, because the new image would bring benefits to the city.

What is significant about these quotes is that they provide an instance when the lack of relevance of the City of Culture as a cultural event, is justified through the narrative of economic development. It is accepted that the event makes a statement about Glasgow which is '75% fictional'. However, this is excused because the purpose of the event is not to celebrate Glaswegian culture. It is part of Glasgow's image building programme and as such, is legitimated against different criteria.

A more sophisticated version of this argument is found in John McGrath's *Letter From Glasgow*. This letter was broadcast on Radio 3, on March 9th 1990, and subsequently published in the May edition of *The Listener* (McGrath 1990a). It represents McGrath's fullest statement on the City of Culture event. John McGrath is a self styled socialist playwright. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, he defined his professional role to be that of retaining the 'counter theatre' movement in a climate of repression (McGrath 1990b). This climate of repression touched McGrath personally when his oppositional 7:84 Theatre Company was forced into silence when Arts Council grants were stopped. Working with the Wildcat Theatre Company, McGrath directed the play *John Brown's Body*, which ran in Glasgow for four weeks during 1990. This play was not funded from the City of Culture budget.

Three aspects of McGrath's *Letter* are of interest here. First, McGrath sought to compare the City of Culture event with existing cultural genres in the city. Consideration will be given here to his comparison of Glasgow's working class culture with that available during 1990. According to McGrath, there exists among Glasgow's working classes, a 'dense, multi-coloured... non establishment, non bourgeois, radical socialist' culture (McGrath 1990a p5). This evolved out of the events of 'Red Clydeside'. It has appeared in the form of such institutions as Glasgow's Unity Theatre, 7.84, Wildcat, Borderline, Clyde Unity, and TAG, and such local 'artists' as Joe Corrie, Ena Lamont Stewart, Ken Currie, Peter Howson, James Kelman and Alisdair Gray (the latter two of Workers City fame).

In comparing this tradition with the City of Culture event, McGrath seems to employ two different vocabularies. In the case of working class culture, words such as 'strong', 'energetic', 'organised', 'vigorous' and 'vibrant' are used. In contrast, the City of Culture event is referred to through such phrases as 'P.R. adrenalin pumping fast', and words, 'sparked', 'fire', and 'fireworks'. With the former, a 'richer' feel is given. There would appear to be some substance to this cultural tradition. The latter, in contrast, seems to have a more 'tabloid' and 'plastic' feel. Indeed, throughout the broadcast, one gets the impression that McGrath regards the City of Culture event as more 'hype' than substance. Working class culture in contrast, is referred to in a way which seems to suggest that it has much deeper roots in the

local community. McGrath's analysis is similar to Workers City's in the sense that the P.R. orientation of the event is seen to be important in terms of its cultural substance.

Second, contrary to Workers City however, McGrath makes the case that this is *acceptable* because economic regeneration is badly needed in Glasgow. Referring specifically to Glasgow's image as a Socialist city, McGrath indeed even appears to have sympathy with attempts designed to overturn a tradition he himself supports;

'there was a real fear that the red image was putting off the managers of the multinational corporations... With the heavy industries in decline, the writing seemed to be on the wall. The image had to be changed. One way to help this change along was to foster a cultural revival...'

(McGrath 1990a p6)

Further, praising the Labour group for being 'eminently practical', McGrath goes on to give his approval to this use of culture as a vehicle for economic regeneration;

'Glasgow has shown an astonishing ability to remake itself generation after generation, with the disrespect for established ways of thinking more often associated with an American City. If acting as Europe's City of Culture for 1990 is going to help Glasgow to launch itself ... into a new phase of its existence, then Europe will have done a good thing.'

(McGrath 1990a p6)

Like the Railwaymen then, concern about the extent to which the City of Culture event had 'touched' working class Glasgow is allayed by drawing upon the narrative of economic regeneration. The City of Culture event is seen as legitimate not so much as a cultural event but as an tool for economic

regeneration.

The final argument in McGrath's *Letter* relates to the future commitment by the local Labour group to working class culture in Glasgow. This strand takes McGrath's letter beyond the interview with the Railwaymen reported upon above. McGrath suggests that Glasgow District Council is firmly in control of its cultural policy. Further, he asserts that the council retains an ideological commitment to catering for 'the people', and that the current policy simply represents a *temporary*, practical measure. Indeed, even in the City of Culture event he argues, one sees glimpses of the council's *real* commitments. He refers particularly here to the council's support of cultural events in the peripheral estates, and Bill Brydens's play *The Ship* (described in chapter 9). There is no possibility that Glasgow will be inundated with 'glitzy', 'spectacular' entertainers. The long term future of Glasgow's working class culture is assured.

11.5 Summary

This chapter has examined two alternative strategies designed to resolve the dilemma surrounding the extent to which the cultural substance of the City of Culture event catered for the 'ordinary' Glaswegian. In chapter 8, it was shown that officials attempted to resolve this dilemma by arguing that the event had been 'co-authored' with locals and as such, did infact represent Glasgow's indigenous culture. That the two strategies examined did not themselves form the cornerstone

of the official argument is interesting in itself and will be discussed further in the conclusion to the thesis.

First, it was shown that there existed a set of arguments which defended the event, *as a cultural event*, despite acknowledging that it did not reflect 'real' Glaswegian culture - as defined by the critics. One argument posed the problem in terms of 'high' and 'working class culture'. The event could be justified as an exercise in high culture since it was somewhat 'patronising' to argue that working class people could not appreciate 'culture'. Whilst *apparently* standing up for the local working classes, this line of argument functioned to legitimate the introduction of orthodox, bourgeois, middle class culture into the city.

An alternative argument, embodied in Josefina Cupido's Residency at the Unemployed Workers Centre in the Gorbals, focussed upon the merits of introducing *alternative* culture, into Glasgow. The event would offer Glaswegians the *opportunity* to try things they might not otherwise have had the option of. Learning about different cultures was in itself of intrinsic merit. In contrast to Workers City, Cupido argued that the culture which she was 'importing' into Glasgow was not 'commercial' in orientation. It represented a genuine attempt to explore the culture of ethnic minorities.

The second strategy examined attempted to defend the cultural

substance of the event through reference to the narrative of economic regeneration. The cultural substance of the City of Culture event was largely alien to the interests of working class Glasgow. The event was not, however, to be evaluated *as a cultural event*. It formed part of an image building campaign designed to bring money into the city and create jobs. As such, it was hardly surprising that the type of culture on offer had little relevance to working class Glasgow. Once the city's economic regeneration needs had waned however, the council would return to catering for 'the people'.

This chapter completes discussion on the first major area . of debate which took place in Glasgow during 1990; that of the cultural substance of the City of Culture event. In the final three chapters, attention will be directed towards the other three areas of debate noted in the introduction; the virtues of spending so much on culture when there exists more needier causes (Chapter 12), the morality of engaging in image building (Chapter 13), and the financial competence of council officials (Chapter 14).

CHAPTER 12 - THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF 'CULTURE' IN THE WELFARE BUDGET

12.1 Introduction

The second major issue over which debate took place during 1990, was the wisdom of using 'scarce' welfare funds to finance what was often described in this context as, 'nothing more than a cultural jamboree'. This debate was fuelled by the belief that the cultural substance of the event was alien to that preferred by the local community. Nonetheless, the argument was extended to question the merit of investing in culture *per se*, when more practical assistance was needed by some of the more deprived groups in the city. Culture in this sense was regarded as something of secondary importance; to be invested in only after the more important things had been taken care of. The basic tenets of this argument will be outlined in section 12.2. This will be followed in sections 12.3 and 12.4, with a summary of the dialogue which was subsequently generated between the District Council and critics.

12.2 The criticism

Throughout the debate, a number of key events were frequently cited to highlight how costly the event was proving to be. James Kelman (Night Flyte STV 4/7/91) and Norman Bissell (1990) for instance, circulated such exaggerated figures as £10 million outlay on the Glasgow's Glasgow exhibition, £2.5 million on the Bolshoi Opera, £1 million on Frank Sinatra, and

£1 million on the Big Day. Even Public Sector expenditure which was not from the 1990 budget (£6 million for the new Concert Hall), and privately funded events (such as £1 million on Pavarotti's visit), were drawn upon to promote the idea that a large amount of money was being spent on cultural events (Bissell 1990).

In this context, Workers City criticised the council for spending so much on culture when deprivation in Glasgow's peripheral housing schemes was 'so rife'. Farquhar McLay, for example, in a phone call to a programme on Radio Clyde 2, in which Neil Wallace was appearing, argued;

'If you think of the dereliction in places like Drumchapel and Possilpark, I mean, that money could have helped the poor people there and after all it's their money. And then again if you consider 95,000 houses here officially classified as low to tolerable standard, that's just a new way of saying unfit for humans to live in, and then you think of Pavarotti and the Bolshoi coming over here, I mean it makes a nonsense.'

(Farquhar McLay Talk in Sunday Radio Clyde 2 2/7/89)

This was a criticism which had wider appeal among members of the general public. In the course of a number of 'phone in' radio debates on 1990, a number of callers complained about expenditure on the City of Culture event in the context of problems they were having in getting the council to repair their houses. For example;

'Well, I would just like to ask why Glasgow District Council are refusing to do repairs to District Council houses because they say they've got no money. They say they can't afford to do them. Yet people's houses are damp and they can't get them repaired and all of a sudden they come up with £27 million for culture.'

(Caller Talk in Sunday Radio Clyde 2 2/7/89)

'You know, there's a lot of people who think that it's ridiculous that the council can fritter away so much money on this event when there are so many other things that badly need doing..From my point of view, I've been waiting on getting Decanted [moved out of the house whilst it gets modernised] for over six months now and I can't get a straight answer from the council because they say, 'oh we need to see if we can get money from this or that budget'. You know, how can they then spend airy fairy so much on what is, let's face it, really just a one off party.'

(Caller Tuesday Review Radio Scotland 2/1/90)

From the point of view of critics therefore, Glasgow 1990 represented a net redistribution of funds, away from welfare provision and towards a 'one off party'. 'Culture' was defined as something of a luxury. Basic needs ought to have received higher priority.

12.3 The official response

Council officials drew upon at least three different arguments in formulating a defence against this criticism. The most common argument which was advanced was that the event had been financed from a Special Fund the city had accumulated during previous years. As noted in Chapter 6, this Special Fund amounted to some £15 million. Due to the way local authorities were obliged to spend money, they could not legally have used this Special Fund to finance projects in other areas of council activity. City of Culture money therefore, because of the legality of local authority expenditure arrangements, could not have been used to repair or modernise council houses.

The following quotes from Pat Lally, made in the face of criticism about the the council's prioritisation of welfare

funds during 1990, illustrate both the argument involved, and Lally's frustration at not being able to get the point across:

'At my surgeries as a Castlemilk councillor, I see every week the human evidence of the size of the mountain we must climb...I am frustrated beyond belief that even if the council did not spend one single penny on arts and culture, we would not be allowed to spend an extra penny on housing repairs or curing dampness.'

(Pat Lally Glasgow Herald June 30th 1990a p6)

'If we had not spent that £15 million [on culture] we couldn't have spent it on dealing with our housing problems... and that is something we've tried to be clear on from the outset.'

(Pat Lally STV Scotland Today 24/8/90)

'What the critics have ignored is the fact that culture money could not have been spent on housing. If we spent not one penny on culture, we still could not have spent any more on housing because of the way housing finance and local government finance is organised. We are prohibited by central government from doing so.'

(Pat Lally in Marion Pallister Evening Times 6/9/90a p9)

'We mustn't pretend that we don't have enormous problems...A recent report by an independent team led by Sir Bob Grieve identified that we need about £300 million over ten years to solve Glasgow's housing problems. We have resources at the moment only to cover about one third of that, so this is a huge problem. People say, how can you spend £30 million on a Concert Hall or £15 million on the City of Culture and you cannot do anything about our houses. But what they don't realise is that if we didn't spend a penny on either of those things, we still couldn't have spent a penny on housing. That's one of the facts of life and it's difficult to get that over to people but it happens to be true.'

(Pat Lally Whose Culture Radio Clyde 2 20/12/90)

In these quotes, one sees Lally positioning himself on the side of the critics. Like them, he too is acutely aware of Glasgow's housing problems. Like them, he is 'frustrated beyond belief'

that the money spent on culture during 1990 was not spent on housing. The decision however, was outwith his control. Government rules decreed that it *had* to be spent on culture. By using this argument, Lally effectively managed to deflect criticism away from the District Council. The debate was displaced onto the broader question of 'who sets local government rules'.

The second line of defence was to trivialise the actual amount spent on the event. By then making a comparison between the *large* amount required to solve Glasgow's housing problems and the *small* amount spent on the event, it was suggested that even if City of Culture funds had been spent on housing, they would have made little impact. With respect to the first part of the argument, Neil Wallace, in radio interviews conducted in the build up to the event, pointed out that whilst the District Council was putting a substantial amount into the event, only a fraction of this was expenditure (from the Special Fund) over and above that normally allocated to culture. At that point, it was thought that only £40 million would be spent in total;

'I don't want anyone to be misled by this figure of £40 million. That's not £40 million of public money which is being conjured up from nowhere just to spend on this event. A very large part of that is comprised of sums of money which we are making available to the established cultural organisations in the city who would have received that money in any case.'

(Neil Wallace Talk in Sunday Radio Clyde 2 2/7/89)

This then led Wallace to suggest that only £6 million of additional revenue would be spent. This money was to

come from the Special Fund. Once more, Wallace's statistics proved in the end to considerably underestimate the amount spent. Nevertheless, the £6 million figure was used to argue that expenditure on 1990 would not have made any great difference to the city's housing problems. Referring, like Pat Lally above, to Sir Robert Grieve's report on Glasgow's housing problems, which claimed that the city needed some £300 million over ten years if it is to solve its housing problems, Wallace argued;

'If we take the £6 million input, now the figure I understand to be required for reasonable housing repairs across the city is something approaching £300 million. If that is the case, then we can surely justifiably reply by saying that £6 million wouldn't have made much of a dent in that. The problem here is really one between the District Council and the national government and the lack of support from the latter is the chief problem everyone should be concerned about.'

(Neil Wallace Talk in Sunday Radio Clyde 2 2/7/89)

This line of argument was also put forward by Sam Warnock of the Festivals Office in the course of the Field interview;

'I have no problem justifying what we've spent. You know, a recent report pointed out that we need something in the region of £300 million to solve just the main problems we have with council housing. You know, when you think of the £15 or so million we have spent here and you think of that figure, its really just a drop in the ocean.'

(Sam Warnock Fieldwork Interview 6/9/90)

The final strategy used was to emphasise the economic benefits the event would bring. Pat Lally in particular, argued that given that the council was forced to spend money on culture, they had tried to do so in a way that would bring more practical benefits to the local community. Drawing upon the narrative of economic regeneration, Lally suggested

that because 1990 would contribute to the wider programme of changing Glasgow's image, and because it might consequently result in more tourists and investment, assistance to the local community in the form of increased employment would result. Consequently, instead of being seen as a misprioritisation of scarce welfare funds, the event was to be regarded as a highly practical way of trying to assist those most in need in the city. The council were not to be thought of as ignoring the needs of the community, but instead were to be regarded as motivated by the employment circumstances of locals.

One particularly striking example of this can be seen in the following quote offered by Lally in the course of a Radio Clyde 2 interview on the cost of the event in August 1990. In reply to the critics, Lally made reference to Glasgow's inward investment portfolio. His comments made use of a document produced by the Planning Department calculating the total amount of capital investment in Glasgow recently completed, about to be completed, or at the planning stage. This was said to amount to more than £2 billion (Glasgow District Council 1990b). In formulating a defence, Lally argued that this level of investment was attributable to the City of Culture event and its ability to attract international capital;

'The situation is therefore, that if we can't spend it on housing we have to spend it on cultural activities and the returns on this are considerable. We've attracted something like £2 billion worth of investment so far. So £15 million, set against a return of £2 billion in terms of other developments within the city, is a very good return on

your money.'

(Pat Lally Whose Culture Radio Clyde 2 23/8/90)

In trying to deflect the critics argument therefore, officials pointed out that they *agreed* with the position of the critics, but were powerless to spend City of Culture money on housing. They relocated blame towards the *system* of local government finance in general. Further, they pointed out that so small was the City of Culture fund in comparison to the problems faced, that diverting the Special Fund into housing would have made little impact in any event. Finally, taking a more aggressive stance, the narrative of economic regeneration was drawn upon to suggest that material benefits *would* be obtained. The City of Culture event was not necessarily a gratuitous 'party'. It would bring investment and jobs. The critics were wrong then, to see the event simply as a 'cultural jamboree'.

12.4 Doubts about the authenticity of the council's position

The council's arguments did not go unchallenged. In particular, critics questioned the legitimacy of the council's claim that they could not have spent 1990 money on housing because of local authority expenditure restrictions. The general point made by the critics was that whilst the council may *in theory* have been restricted vis-à-vis what they could spend the money on, they had made no effort to *challenge* the rules and indeed had seemed to fully embrace them. The council should have been 'creative' in the way it spent the Special

Fund. It could easily have claimed for instance, that painting houses was an artistic endeavour. It was the seemingly enthusiastic embracing of the restriction by the council which was important. This undermined Lally's claim that he was 'frustrated beyond belief' at not being able to spend the money on housing.

It is useful to refer here to the Easthall Theatre Group. It will be recalled from chapter 10 that this group put on a play during 1990 which was highly critical of the District Council's involvement in the City of Culture event. The argument used by the group was identical to that examined in this chapter. Expenditure on the City of Culture event represented a misprioritisation of precious local authority finance. The group's specific concern with damp housing, and housing issues more generally, ought to have received higher priority.

In the field interview, the first strategy used by the council to defend themselves identified above, was mentioned. One member of the group argued;

'There's nothing to stop them from using the money they spent on the City of Culture on improving people's houses. Okay, it's against the law, right, but they could have done it if they were determined, If they were more concerned about people's health and the people of Glasgow, they *could* have done it. They *could* have challenged the law. They *could* have bent rules a bit if they wanted. They *could* have challenged the Government.' [Italics added]

(Easthall Theatre Group Fieldwork Interview 9/10/90)

One particularly 'creative' way in which the problem of financial restriction could be overcome was provided by

Bert Moorehouse in a radio discussion on the event held at the end of the year. As noted in chapter 5, Bert Moorehouse, a Sociologist at Glasgow University, emerged as a public critic of the City of Culture event. Moorehouse argued that whilst the council were indeed legally bound to spend this money on culture, they could have reduced Poll Tax bills by the amount which the event cost, thereby leaving the money in the pockets of the people most in need. This would have meant that money could have been invested by people themselves in improving their houses. It was false to claim therefore, that the council was *forced* to collect tax only for the purpose of hosting a cultural event.

It is worthwhile repeating the heated discussion between Pat Lally (PL) and Moorehouse (BM) which took place on this programme:

BM 'I think that some of the money spent on 1990 could have been spent on those lead pipes.'

PL 'It couldn't...I hope when you are gathering your facts you do gather *facts* on this issue because I can tell you that not one single penny of that money could have gone into dealing with somebody's lead pipes or their dampness problems or their leaking roof or their need for new windows. It's just not true. So get your facts right rather than making claims which I tell you are totally inaccurate.' [Italics added]

BM 'Well if that money came from the Poll Tax, you could have left it in the pockets of ordinary Glaswegians to spend as they wanted to. So it's not given by God or anyone else, that you had to spend this amount of money in this particular way.'

PL 'It is given by the government of the United Kingdom, that it's to be spent in this kind of fashion. God obviously doesn't exert much influence there but the government certainly exerts a heck of a lot of influence.'

(Whose Culture Radio Clyde 2 20/12/90)

12.5 Conclusion

The focus of this chapter has been upon the criticism that 1990 constituted a misprioritisation of scarce local authority expenditure. Critics suggested that spending so much on a 'cultural jamboree' was unjustifiable given the more practical assistance communities in deprived areas of Glasgow required. Council officials had shown poor judgement.

Officials attempted to counter this criticism by drawing upon three arguments. The main strategy used was to sympathise with the position of the critics, but to point out that due to the restrictions of local authority finance, the council was not permitted to spend money from the Special Fund on housing. They shared the critics point of view but were powerless to do anything about it because of the 'system'. Criticism was thereby diverted away from the specific case of the City of Culture and towards the 'system' more generally; from the District Council to the national government.

Critics however, disputed the extent to which the council really did sympathise with their point of view. It was suggested that if the council were serious about welfare provision, they would have engaged in a 'creative' usage of the Special Fund. That they did not was a measure of the lack of authenticity of their concern. For the critics, references to the 'system' were nothing more than a convenient excuse.

CHAPTER 13 - GLASGOW'S REGENERATION : IMAGE OR REALITY ?

13.1 Introduction

The third area of debate in Glasgow during 1990 focussed upon the images of the city which council officials were cultivating. Some commentators believed that these images were trying to conceal the *reality* of life as it is faced by working class people in the city. As such, the council were criticised for failing to *respect* the problems faced by the local working classes and for circulating myths designed to legitimate their own regeneration programme.

In this chapter, it will be argued that image building took two forms in Glasgow during 1990. First, the City of Culture event was itself an image building device geared towards the *aesthetic regeneration* of Glasgow. By its very nature however, it functioned to legitimate the notion that Glasgow *had* changed for the better. As a central actor in the creation of images of the 'new Glasgow', the City of Culture event will be examined in section 13.2.

Second, the claims of economic regeneration which were made during 1990 themselves functioned as image building devices. That is, there was substantial hype that Glasgow's economy was regenerating and that this was in part the result of the City of Culture event. The impression thereby created was that those problems associated with decline were being overcome; Glasgow was a much better place to live and work in.

This second aspect of image building will be examined in section 13.3.

In the remainder of the chapter, attention will turn to the argument put forward by critics. Discussion will concentrate in the main on Workers City's position (section 13.3), however attention will also be given to the activities of the Cranhill Arts Project. Using City of Culture funds, this latter group mounted a photographic exhibition during 1990 based on the idea that *stories* of Glasgow's regeneration were disguising *reality*.

13.2 The City of Culture event and images of the 'new' Glasgow

Two images of Glasgow generated as a consequence of the City of Culture event will be examined here; those of Glasgow as a city where *spectacular* events occur, and Glasgow as a bustling city, full of things to do and see. Clearly, other images of the city permeated the event. The two examined here nevertheless, seemed to predominate.

13.2.1 Glasgow as a city where *spectacular* events occur

In a live radio discussion on Radio Clyde 2, local Art Critic to the Glasgow Herald, Michael Tumelty, made an observation which can usefully be called upon here by way of introduction. Talking about the planned visit by opera singer

Luciano Pavarotti to Glasgow, Tumelty criticised the way the event had been advertised;

'I believe that the Pavarotti presentation has been a profound misconception from the word go. It remains so. It has been conceived as what the manager of Scottish Opera called 'an enjoyable night of opera'. Wrong, wrong and wrong again. Pavarotti is not an opera singer. Pavarotti is a megastar. Pavarotti is a slightly more inflated Michael Jackson.'

(Michael Tumelty Radio Clyde 2 Talk-in Sunday 7/1/90)

In this quote, Tumelty makes a distinction between 'Pavarotti' the opera singer, and 'Pavarotti' the 'mega-star'. Whilst in the case of the former the consumer might be regarded as being appreciative of Pavarotti's singing abilities, emphasis in the latter is upon Pavarotti's *status*. What is consumed is the *status* of Pavarotti as a 'spectacular' performer.

Attending a Pavarotti concert represents what Ley and Olds (1988) refer to as 'heroic consumption'. Spectacle plays not on the content of performances but the *aura* that surrounds the performance.

The language of spectacle did infact permeate accounts of City of Culture events during 1990, including Pavarotti's visit. Indeed, one critic, in a review article at the end of the year, suggested that the key motto of Glasgow's efforts during 1990 can be captured in the phrase - 'if something is worth doing, it is worth over-doing' (Bruce 1991 23). Michael Donnelly (of Elspeth King Affair fame) makes the same point when he argues;

'It's all one big grandiose event after another...it's the

old anything you can do I can do bigger routine. They say that Glaswegians have an inferiority complex. We have seen plenty of that this year, if it's not over £1 million, if it's not the best in the world, if it doesn't involve fireworks and fanfares, then it's considered worthless.'

(Michael Donnelly Focal Point BBC 1 11/12/90)

In particular, clear manifestations of the language of spectacle appeared in media coverage of the bigger events such as the *Hogmanay Party* which opened the event (Jan. 1); the *Glasgow's Glasgow* exhibition tracing out the city's 816 year history (Apr. 13-Nov. 5); Pavarotti's visit (May 16); the *Big Day* rock and pop event (June 3); concerts by the major pop stars such as Paul McCartney (June 23), Frank Sinatra (July 10), and the Rolling Stones (July 16); the performances by the Bolshoi Opera (Aug. 3-6, 10-12); Bill Bryden's play *The Ship* (Sept. 10 - Oct. 27); *Glasgow All Lit Up*, a lantern procession across the city (Oct. 6); The *Age of Van Gogh* exhibition (Nov. 10 - Feb. 10, '91); and the European Film Awards (Dec. 2). Clearly, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to present a comprehensive examination of the way officials and the media represented these and other 1990 events as *spectacular*. Nevertheless, to exemplify the point, consider some of the headlines used in the popular press' coverage of one of the above events - The Big Day.

The Big Day was a massive rock and pop festival which took place in four different locations in Glasgow on June 3rd 1990. It was co-funded between the Festivals Office (who contributed £900,000) and Channel 4 TV (who contributed £1

million). The latter took the event live to over thirteen countries. A total of forty bands took part in the event including *Wet Wet Wet*, Sheena Easton, *Hue and Cry*, and *Deacon Blue*. It was estimated that over 200,000 people attended.

Figure 13.1 shows a selection of headlines from the popular press' coverage of the event. The overwhelming impression

Figure 13.1 - Headlines from the popular press' coverage of
The Big Day

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1. 'Pure dead brilliant - the greatest rock show on earth!'
(Daily Record 4/6/90)
 2. '250,000 whoop it up at the world's greatest party.'
(The Sun 4/6/90)
 3. 'Party of the century - 250,000 revellers go to town and join the biggest street jamboree ever.'
(Daily Express 4/6/90)
 4. 'Glasgow is centre stage in world's biggest party.'
(Scotland on Sunday 3/6/90)
 5. 'Let's party - Glasgow hits the streets with the grandest party of all.'
(Evening Times 22/3/90)
 6. 'Glasgow rocks to £2.5 million street party.'
(Today 4/6/90)
-

given by these quotations is one of 'hype'. And, it is immediately apparent that some exaggerated claims about the status of the event were being made. That is, the headlines 'the greatest rock show on earth', 'the world's greatest party', the 'party of the century', 'the biggest street jamboree ever', and 'the grandest party of all', all function to inflate the status of the event into the realms of the 'spectacular'.

The event, by quoting dubious figures for both attendance (250,000) and cost (£2.5 million), is further *sensationalised*.

The Big Day then, is a good example of the way the City of Culture was used to sell Glasgow as a place where spectacular events occur. 'Spectacle' works by 'hyping up' the status of an event at the expense of a concern for its content. The Big Day, which reached a massive audience, both through its channel 4 and national press coverage, represents a practical manifestation of the image building ethos.

13.2.2 Glasgow as a city with lots to do and see .

Saatchi and Saatchi, the London based marketing agency, were officially hired to help promote the event (see Chapter 6). The main aim of employing this agency was to promote the City of Culture event to potential tourists, particularly those from the South East of England. Consequently, Saatchi and Saatchi's advertisement campaign tended to concentrate on the national London based newspapers such as *The Independent*, *The Observer* and *The Times*. The advertisements nevertheless reached the local press, appearing in particular in the *Glasgow Herald*.

Saatchi and Saatchi's tasks were to produce an official slogan for the event which could be attached to all Festivals Office literature, and to design twelve different advertisements promoting the year. As a *branding device*, both the slogan and

the adverts were written in Mackintosh alphabet, after the famous Glaswegian artist Charles Rennie Mackintosh.

In order to understand the slogan chosen and the nature of the advertisements produced, it is useful to examine comments made by Andrew Horberry, Saatchi and Saatchi's Scottish representative (now ex-representative), on the results of the market research the company undertook. Having interviewed groups in Birmingham, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Glasgow, London and Newcastle, Horberry reported;

'We discovered that if we explained that there would be over 2000 special events happening during the year, our audience showed a great deal of interest. There had to be at least one of those events, they reasoned, that they would want to attend...Consequently, we knew we had to project Glasgow as a city buzzing with activity, a place where there is a lot going on. That's why the slogan for the campaign is, 'There's a Lot Glasgowing on'...That's why the ads. will juxtapose Robbie Coltrane with the Russian Pole Vault team, and Pavarotti with Erasure. 1990 will have something for everybody.'

(Andrew Horberry 1990 Official Factsheet 7 p2)

This quote highlights the rationale behind Saatchi and Saatchi's marketing strategy for 1990. They constituted Glasgow 1990 through the number of events (2000 quoted here) it involved. This thereby conveyed the impression of Glasgow as a place where there are lots of things to do. Furthermore the quote describes Glasgow 1990 as a heterogeneous event encompassing a wide latitude of activities. The 'ads.', it is suggested, will convey this impression by 'juxtaposing' types of entertainment that would not be ordinarily conceived under one banner. One Scottish comedian was positioned with a

Russian team from a completely separate sphere - sport. A famous guardian of high culture, Pavarotti, was placed next to a pop group, *Erasure*. This emphasis upon volume and diversity, was to be captured in the slogan; 'There's a lot Glasgowing on in 1990' (Figure 13.2).

Figure 13.2 illustrates the manifestation of these points in practice. Two Saatchi and Saatchi adverts, taken from newspapers, are shown. They are typical of the twelve produced overall. The headlines in both cases focus upon the theme of variety. In the first advert, four different spheres of culture are juxtaposed against one another; 'art', 'sport', 'music' and 'drama'. Question marks next to each suggest that the variety is almost *perplexing*. This image of bewilderment in the face of so much choice, is captured in the closing phrase, 'what's Glasgowing on next ?'

The focus of the second advertisement is the Mayfest event, celebrated during the year as part of the City of Culture programme. The headlines once more convey the image of variety. It is impossible to list all that is happening during Mayfest within the confines of the advert. Once more, the image of a 'buzz' of activity is created. This message is reinforced in the small print; Mayfest will be 'bigger' and 'busier' than ever and will offer a 'wealth of special things to see and do'. As in the first advertisement, the collective representation of a heterogeneous group of 'stars' (for example blues singer Nina Simone and transvestite

Figure 13.2 Examples of saatchi and saatchi's adverts

ART? SPORT? MUSIC? DRAMA? WHAT'S GLASGOWING ON NEXT?

If you're going to get the most out of Glasgow's year as Cultural Capital of Europe, you have to stay right up to date.

To get hold of your copy of the free brochure highlighting events between April and June, phone 041 204 4400 or fill in the coupon.

Your diary's depending on it.

By Glasgow 1990 PO Box 88, Glasgow G1 2ET
Please send me a free Guide to April, May and June events in Glasgow

Name: _____
Address: _____
Postcode: _____
Tel No: _____

**THERE'S
A LOT
GLASGOWING
ON IN
1990.**
CULTURAL CAPITAL '90

Glasgow Herald 18/4/90

IF WE COULD TELL YOU EVERYTHING ABOUT MAYFEST HERE YOU WOULDN'T NEED THE COUPON.

Yet again the stage is set for an even bigger and busier Mayfest. Amongst 1990's line-up, stars such as Nina Simone and Billy Bragg will share the limelight with Julian Clary and African arts from the front line.

As if all that isn't enough to get you packing, as Cultural Capital of Europe 1990, Glasgow offers a wealth of special things to see and do. So act now, send off the coupon for details of Mayfest events and places to stay.

Mayfest 4th to 26th May 1990

By: Mayfest, PO Box 88, Glasgow, G1 2ET.

Name: _____ G1204
Address: _____
Postcode: _____

**THERE'S
A LOT
GLASGOWING
ON IN
1990.**
CULTURAL CAPITAL '90

The Review Guardian 12/4/90

comedian Julian Clary) is used to stimulate the idea of variety.

Saatchi and Saatchi's contribution to the Year of Culture therefore, involved projecting images of Glasgow as a city packed full of things to do and see. Glasgow is portrayed as a place 'buzzing with activity'. This image was transmitted across the United Kingdom in a newspaper campaign aimed at attracting tourists, principally from the South-East. Combined, the images of *spectacle* and *activity* can be regarded as playing an important role in the construction of images of Glasgow as a 'city reborn'.

13.3 Images of economic recovery

Complementary and more direct claims regarding Glasgow's rebirth were made in references during 1990 to the economic regeneration of the city. To begin with, it is useful to note that official rhetoric during 1990 was rich in a language of *positive* change. In publications such as *Glasgow: a city reborn* (the city's main promotional brochure - Glasgow District Council 1990a), the *Official Guide* to the event (Glasgow District Council 1990b), and *The Bulletin* (December 1991), the following words and phrases were frequently used: regeneration, rejuvenation, renewal, transformation, resurrection, redevelopment, reborn, rehabilitation, renaissance, reconstruction, revitalisation, refurbishment, renovation, turnaround, modernised,

Cinderella City, Phoenix from the Ashes, and the Emperor Strikes Back.

Two contexts within which these words were used are particularly significant and will be examined here. First, the language of revival was used in connection with assessments of the economic impact of the City of Culture event made towards the end of the year. Second, the level of property investment in Glasgow was frequently drawn upon as an index of revival. Moreover, recent property developments might be regarded as inscribing the narrative of regeneration onto Glasgow's built environment such that Glaswegians encounter 'icons of recovery' as part of their daily lives.

13.3.1 The economic impact of the City of Culture event
(see Note 1)

Having defined a number of economic objectives for the City of Culture event (Chapter 6), officials were keen to suggest that these objectives were being realised. In a financial statement in the *Glasgow Herald* towards the end of the year, Treasurer Jean McFadden argued;

'we await an independent report(1) on the impact of 1990 on the local economy, but so far we estimate that over 25,000 people have been employed in the arts during the year. We've had over four million visitors to the city, spending over £80 million, and we reckon that has generated around 5000 jobs.'

(Jean McFadden *Glasgow Herald* December 28th p13)

Similarly, in Pat Lally's reply to critic Gordon Craig, in

the New York Review of Books in September 1991, it was claimed that the event had attracted 4 million visitors, who had spent £80 million. On this occasion however, Lally claimed that 8,000 new jobs had been created (Lally 1991b). Since no immediate assessment of the number of jobs and wealth created could be offered during the year, however, official rhetoric tended to focus on surrogate measures of regeneration- in particular, how *successful* Glasgow's image building strategy had been.

For example, in a summary report on the year published by the District Council (Glasgow District Council 1991c), it was reported that 'awareness' of Glasgow's role as European City of Culture had risen 'dramatically' during the year. By September 1990, over 77% of people from the South East knew of the event. This compared favourably to the figure of 21% which was recorded in October 1989. This statistic was also circulated in a press release by the Tourist Board and reached some of the daily newspapers. Other statistics were also cited. Council leader Pat Lally, in a radio interview in December 1990, for example, referred to a survey that had been undertaken in Paris, the holder of the title in 1989. This survey revealed that 60% of Parisians were aware that Glasgow was the 1990 holder. This was 'astonishing', Lally stated, given that the same survey revealed that only 30% were aware that Paris had obtained the title the year before (Radio Clyde 2 Whose Culture ? 20/12/90).

Manifestations of the success of Glasgow's promotional campaigns were also seized upon and broadcast. When Saatchi and Saatchi's adverts were awarded first place in *Scotmedia's* Scottish advertisements award ceremony, *The Bulletin* carried a eulogy (The Bulletin October 1990a). Further, when the Tourist Board's 1990 campaign received the prestigious 'Best UK Tourism Marketing Award', news was circulated via a press release. Wherever Glaswegians looked, they were confronted with the message : Glasgow had successfully managed to promote itself. The event was succeeding in getting new images of the city across to people.

Aside from image improvements, reference was also made to the number of tourists who had visited the city. Tourist 'bednights', attendances at visitor attractions, and tourist enquiries, all became indices of the city's regeneration. Throughout the year, the council adopted a strategy of publishing quotes from local Hoteliers enthusing about the City of Culture. The following four quotes are taken, for example, from the April and October editions of *The Bulletin*:

'There's no doubt that 1990 as a Year of Culture is generating a considerable amount of extra business. The season is just beginning, but potentially, the summer is looking very busy.'

(General manager of the Central Hotel, *The Bulletin* April 1990b p1)

'Bookings are definitely up on last year. The figures so far this year are surpassing our expectations. There is no doubt that the European City of Culture celebrations are having a significant effect on our business with bookings well up on this time last year.'

(Assistant Manager of the Holiday Inn, The Bulletin April 1990b p1)

'This year has been our busiest ever, with a 12% increase over last year. It is now safe to say that Glasgow is truly established as a successful conference and tourism centre.'

(General Manager of the Copthorne Hotel, The Bulletin October 1990c p20)

'We have noticed this year an increase in tourists from the USA, and over the summer months were particularly busy with an average occupancy rate of 70% to 80%.'

(General Manager of the Holiday Inn, The Bulletin October 1990c p20)

At the end of the year, the Tourist Office issued a press release summarising the year's achievements. It began;

'Figures released by Greater Glasgow Tourist Board and Convention Bureau confirm that Glasgow's reign as Cultural Capital of Europe in 1990 was a *resounding tourism success*.' (emphasis in original)

(Greater Glasgow Tourist Board and Convention Bureau 1991 p1)

The document went on to point out that the tourist office had received 1,070,148 enquiries in 1990 which represented a 105% increase on the 1989 figure. It also noted that some 57,828 bednights had been booked through the Tourist Board, which represented a substantial increase on the 1989 figure of 31,871. The release concluded with a quote from Chief Executive Eddie Friel;

'1990 has established Glasgow as a major international tourist destination'.

(Greater Glasgow Tourist Board and Convention Bureau 1991 p1)

The implication was then, that the City of Culture event had made a significant contribution towards the creation of a tourist base to the local economy.

13.3.2 Property investment and regeneration

Claims regarding Glasgow's regeneration were reinforced during the year through reference to the city's property investment portfolio. Glasgow publishes annual reports on property investment in the city. The most recent report (Glasgow District Council 1991b) suggests that recent, current, and planned property investment in Glasgow amounts to £2,551 million. Using this figure, the council labelled Glasgow the 'Two Point Five Billion Pound City'. This represented an update on the slogans 'Two Billion Pound City', and 'Fat City', which derived from earlier reports (Glasgow District Council, 1988b, 1990b). Glasgow's investment portfolio was the largest in the United Kingdom, it was argued, with the exception of London;

'No other city in the United Kingdom outside London can boast a property investment portfolio over the past few years running at an impressive £2 billion.'

(Lord Provost Susan Baird Glasgow District Council 1990a p1)

Table 13.1 shows the volume and form of the £2.5 billion estimate of property investment. From this Table, it can be

Table 13.1 - Property investment in Glasgow in 1991

sector	completed 1990 £m	proposed future investment £m	total investment £m
Housing	85	574	659
Shopping	5.2	307.5	312.7
Offices	39.4	328.6	368
Industry/ business use (class 4)	5.2	270	275.2
Mixed development	3.0	815.5	818.5
Hotel/leisure developments	28.5	86.2	114.7
Total	166.3	2381.8	2548.1

(Compiled from Glasgow District Council 1991b)

seen that of the £2.5 billion claimed for Glasgow, only £166.3 million has actually been completed. It is important to note however that, whilst not shown on the Table, of the £2381.8 million proposed, a start has yet to be made on £2 billion. Further, some proposals have not even been granted planning permission. Consequently, as the various reports freely admit, slogans derived from this unrealised but proposed investment are circulated primarily for P.R. purposes.

Indeed, this is precisely how they were used during 1990. At this juncture, it is useful to refer to an article which appeared in the *Evening Times* on October 24th 1988 (Robertson 1988). This article, entitled 'Fat City: Glasgow is billions better as investment money rolls in', was based on the 1988 investment report (Glasgow District Council

1988b). Its relevance to the present discussion lies in the fact that Glasgow District Council reproduced 2000 special copies of the article in the run up to and during the City of Culture event. These were distributed to media institutions covering the event. The content of this article therefore, is of central interest in the analysis of the council's position. It represents one example of the council's efforts to achieve hegemonic status for one particular point of view.

The article began with the following passage;

'Glasgow is living up to its reputation as the Dear Green Place. But it isn't the autumn leaves swirling in the city's many parks or the splashes of colour of renovated buildings or the multi-coloured rainbow of artistic and cultural renaissance. The truth is, Glasgow is awash with crisp, green pound notes... almost £1.7 billion worth of investment cash is being poured in...And the signs are we ain't seen nothing yet!'

(Robertson 1988 p15)

The author then proceeded to compare Glasgow's performance with that of other cities. 'Other British cities are fighting to *keep up*' (*italics added*) it argued. Birmingham was described as Glasgow's 'closest rival' with 'almost £1.5 billion' worth of investment. Other cities, such as Manchester, Edinburgh, Cardiff, and Liverpool, were falling well behind and were said to be 'envious' of Glasgow.

The article continued;

'Not surprisingly, the hard nosed businessmen behind the projects aren't investing just for the good of Glasgow... 'Profit is a very legitimate objective' said Mr John Davidson, Director of the Confederation of British Industry in Scotland; 'There's not much point in being in business unless you make a profit, which is a blinding

flash of the obvious if ever there was one'.'

(Robertson 1988 p15)

The article then demonstrated how the investment portfolio would *benefit* the 'average council tenant'. It began with the subheading;

'The more cash that comes in, the more benefit to the citizen.'

(Robertson 1988 p14)

It quoted Pat Lally saying;

'At the construction phase of new hotels, houses and leisure centres, there are substantial jobs in the building industry. Once they are finished, it opens the way for an increase in the number of office jobs in the city... Everyone has worked together to earn Glasgow its investment position and that has only been achieved by vision, foresight, negotiation, co-operation, hard work, and a great deal of patience.'

(Robertson 1988 14)

What emerges as striking from this article (and from the rhetoric which surrounded the economic benefits of the City of Culture event) is the degree to which capitalist social relations are reified. The article *celebrates* investment in Glasgow and is profoundly uncritical. It seemed that *any* return of capitalist activity to Glasgow was treated as a victory for the city. Beyond the recognition that profit is a 'legitimate objective', investments are characterised as sources of employment. It is for this reason that discussions of investment are saturated in the language of regeneration. If *any* return of capital is treated as a gain, then the relatively large volume being injected into Glasgow constituted a 'regeneration' or

'recovery'.

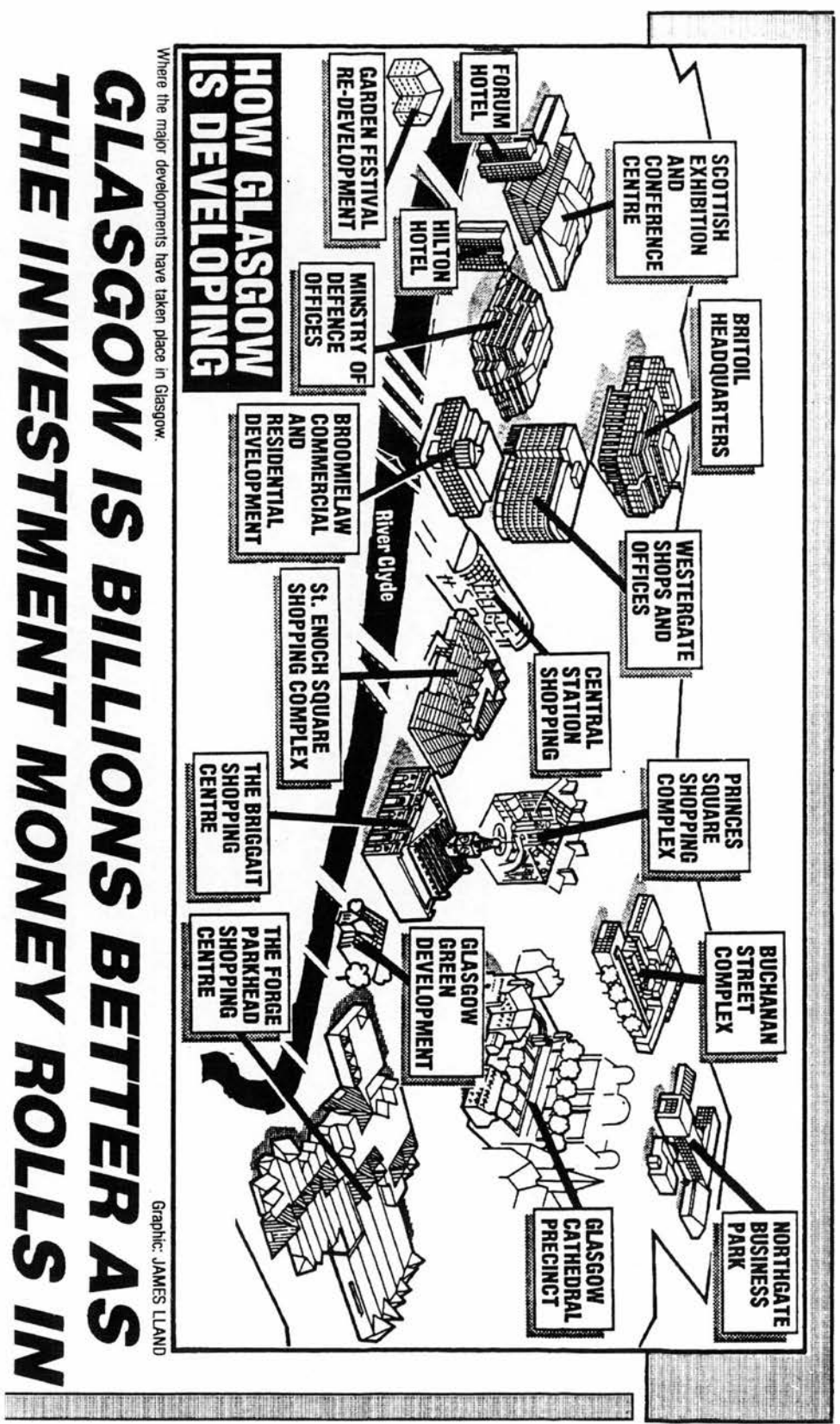
13.3.3 Icons of regeneration in the built environment

Cultural geographers have for some time now argued that the urban landscape itself tells a 'story'. As Cosgrove and Jackson (1987) note, cultural geographers have made much use of notion that the urban landscape is akin to a text in so far as it is open to a plurality of readings. Similarly, it can be argued that recent capital injections in Glasgow's urban fabric form part of the story of the city's 'regeneration'. They function to render visible the changes which are taking place in the city.

In the *Evening Times* article referred to above for example, a map of Glasgow was provided showing major investments which have recently been made (Figure 13.3). The investments identified have made major changes in Glasgow's urban landscape. They include housing developments (such as those on the Garden Festival site and at the Broomielaw), shopping and leisure developments (such as the St. Enoch Centre, Princes Square, and the Parkhead Forge), office construction (such as Britoil's headquarters, the Broomielaw development and the Ministry of Defence offices), and Hotel developments (such as the Forum or Moat House International and Hilton projects).

What is particularly significant in this context, is the way

Figure 13.3 Icons of Glasgow's regeneration



that some developments were characterised in the article as symbols of the 'new' Glasgow. They have come to be regarded as concrete 'proof' that Glasgow is undergoing regeneration. Highlighting some of the 'icons' featured in Figure 13.3, and adding some related ones, Photographs 1 to 13 give a better picture of the way recent investments in Glasgow have inscribed the narrative of regeneration on to the urban fabric (all photographs are in Appendix 2).

Some elementary observations can be made regarding how these developments come to signify the economic rebirth of the city (Note 2). First, it is evident that the architectural design of some of the developments is somewhat ostentatious when set against the otherwise dour Glasgow skyline. One can highlight in this regard, the striking features of the Parkhead Forge and St. Enoch shopping centres (photographs 9 and 10), the Moat House International Hotel (8), the Broomielaw office development (6), and the 'lavish' and 'trendy' appearance of the Merchant City (3), Kingston Docks (1), and Carrick Quay (2) flats, and the Italian Centre and inside of Princes Square (11 and 12).

Second, the functions of some of the new developments set them apart as 'icons' of the new Glasgow. For example, the two hotel developments (7, 8), in particular the five star Hilton project, represent developments not commonly associated with Glasgow. Major hotel expansions in the city reflects increased tourist flow and business travel.

Further, the Princes Square and Italian Centre shopping developments (11, 12) mark the introduction of new, high quality, expensive, designer shops into Glasgow (the only Emporio Armani shop outside London is located in the Italian Centre). The expansion of consumption possibilities also appears in photograph 13. This tries to capture the array of wine bars and continental cafes which have recently flourished in Glasgow. Once again, the fashionable image sets these outlets apart from previous investments.

Third, the sources of the investments are also significant. In many cases, international investment companies are involved. Thus, the Sears Group from the United States are behind the St Enoch Centre (10), the Tay House office development represents Scandinavian money (5), and the Broomielaw development is Japanese in origin (6). That 'Big Business' from all over the world is involved in the developments serves to enhance the idea that Glasgow is once more an important player in the global capitalist economy. Note also the Britoil Headquarters building (4).

Finally, the Hilton development (7) symbolises the fact that the noise and sights of 'construction' are a permanent reminder that Glasgow is undergoing change. One statistic which circulated during 1990 was that over half of all the scaffolding available in the United Kingdom was in Glasgow at that point. Whilst something of an exaggeration, the constant 'buzz' of building can itself be thought of as

an 'icon' of the regeneration of the city. It symbolises activity, energy, the 'coming back to life' of the city

In summary, through rhetoric surrounding the economic impact of the City of Culture event, and the symbolism associated with recent capital investments, Glasgow was represented during 1990 as in the throes of economic regeneration. Capitalism and the language of regeneration intermeshed such that *any* and every new business development was regarded as an unqualified 'achievement'. Nevertheless, positive commentary such as that looked at above, did not go unchallenged. It is towards the response of the critics that attention now turns.

13.4 The position of the critics

In response to the official line, critics questioned the idea that Glasgow was in the midst of a revival. Just as official rhetoric was rich in a language of positive change, the rhetoric of critics was rich in a vocabulary questioning the truth status of official claims. In such articles as McLay (1988b), Torrington (1988), McLaughlin (1990) and Donnelly (1990a and 1990c), and in Sean Damer's (1990a) book *Glasgow: going for a song*, for instance, one finds the official line referred to in the following terms: hollow, camouflage, sham, charade, joke, con, mockery, P.R. trickery, fools gold, mere glitz, veneer, pretence, invented, imaginary, lies, deception, false, fantasy, myth, cosmetic surgery, candy floss, self

congratulatory hype, and Bermecide Feast (note 3).

These terms were used in two different contexts. First, to suggest that the images of the city that officials were circulating were 'false' since they failed to acknowledge the hardships faced by the local working classes. Second, to castigate official rhetoric vis-à-vis the economic impact of recent developments (including the City of Culture event) for failing to make clear just how limited an improvement they would make to the lives of working class people. In the case of the latter, the emphasis was upon problems which were intrinsic to recent developments. The former concentrated upon problems which would endure even if the developments were successful.

13.4.1 Problems the image-makers fail to acknowledge

A number of statistics were drawn upon by critics during 1990 to highlight the hardships Glasgow's working classes were suffering. The following are some examples of the types of statements made:

- * 200,000 unemployed in Strathclyde (McLay 1988b)
- * True rate of unemployment is 26% (Damer 1990a)
- * Unemployment in pockets of Blackhill and Possilpark at 60% (Damer 1990a)
- * 8,000 classified as homeless (McLay 1988b)
- * 35% of the housing stock below the legal minimum (Torrington 1988)
- * 80,000 substandard houses (Torrington 1988)
- * 30% of households with children are single parent households (Damer 1990a)
- * 66% of public sector tenants receiving housing benefits (Damer 1990a)
- * 140,000 people claiming supplementary benefit (Damer 1990a)

* Lack of basic amenities on the housing estates (Damer 1990a)

* Heroin addiction, money lending and prostitution rife (Damer 1990a)

In *Glasgow: going for a song*, Sean Damer made an effort to bring these statistics together by referring to the notion of 'multiple deprivation'. Damer (1990a p14) reported that '45% of Glaswegians now live in Areas of Priority Treatment'. These are areas singled out by Strathclyde Regional Council for special attention due to their high rating on a whole range of deprivation indices. They include inner city areas such as Govan and Parkhead, and peripheral housing estates such as Drumchapel, Castlemilk, Possil, Blackhill, Easterhouse, and Nitshill. On the basis of this observation, Damer submitted the claim;

'Whatever indicators of poverty and deprivation one takes, or however one shakes the cocktail, the fact of the matter is that Glasgow is still far and away the most deprived city in the United Kingdom.'

(Damer 1990a p15)

These observations allowed the criticism that the City of Culture event had presented a false picture of the health of the city, to be made;

'The City of Culture image they present us with is a false image because it highlights only one aspect of the totality and covers up the harsher realities of life as it is lived in the city.'

(Bissell 1990 p67)

'With Saatchi and Saatchi's help they revamp the image and leave the reality untouched. They propagate an image which is false. There is privation and dereliction in the housing schemes, with a third of the housing stock officially classified as 'below tolerable standard',

or as we used to say, perhaps more honestly, 'unfit for human habitation'. There is chronic unemployment and widespread DSS poverty with the usual concomitants - drug abuse and the manifold forms of community violence. This is not the Merchant City, but this is the real Glasgow.'

(McLay 1990c p87)

'Glasgow : European City of Culture 1990. When the announcement came...it had a sickeningly hollow ring to it. When you look at the social, cultural and economic deprivation in working class areas of Glasgow, and you think about the rigours of the new social fund and Poll Tax, it sounded like blatant and cynical mockery.'

(McLay 1988b p1)

13.4.2 Problems endemic in recent developments

Whereas officials uncritically employed the language of regeneration when talking about recent developments, critics were active in promulgating the view that there was little in recent changes of material benefit to Glasgow's working classes. Four arguments in particular were used in this context.

First, regarding the issue of the jobs which the City of Culture event was supposed to bring, questions were raised by Bert Moorehouse as to precisely how many new jobs had been or would be created. As outlined in Chapter 5, Bert Moorehouse is an academic working at the Department of Sociology at Glasgow University. During 1990, he received a grant from the independent Leverhulme Trust to assess the economic impact of the Year of Culture. He made several public comments towards the end of 1990 in radio and television programmes (BBC 1 Focal Point 11/12/90, Radio Clyde 2 Whose

Culture ? 20/12/90).

Specifically, Moorehouse expressed concern at 'the way the event seems to be being over-hyped, not only as a cultural event but also in terms of its economic impacts' (BBC 1 Focal Point 11/12/90). Moorehouse's argument was based upon doubt about the exact benefits a cultural event could bring. There is 'no hard and fast evidence', he suggested, 'to show that if you have a vibrant artistic life in a city you as a consequence of that get a vibrant economic life' (Radio Clyde 2, Whose Culture ? 20/12/90). Posing the rhetorical question, 'do Japanese businessmen come because Pavarotti or Sinatra sings here?' he argued, 'I mean they. simply don't, they come for a complex of reasons....culture might be the icing on the cake but it is a very thin coat of icing' (BBC 1 Focal Point 11/12/90).

In addition, Moorehouse suggested that claims he had seen 'appearing in the media from mid-November onwards' were somewhat spurious. For instance, he suggested that 'the claim that there will be a billion pounds worth of pay off or that tourist beds are up 89%', could 'not sustain much investigation' (BBC 1 Focal Point 11/12/90).

One of the radio programmes involved a live discussion between Moorehouse, Pat Lally, and Bob Palmer. In the course of the discussion, Bob Palmer defied Moorehouse to explain 'how attendance figures of nine million can be downplayed'. Moorehouse replied;

'even although I have attended more arts events this year, that does not mean to say I have injected any new money into the local economy. All it means is that I have redistributed part of my expendable income away from videos and golf and towards a visit to the theatre.'

(Bert Moorehouse Radio Clyde 2 Whose Culture ? 20/12/90)

For Moorehouse then, the claims which were being made for the City of Culture event were exaggerated. He doubted whether the event really had brought in the level of investment and tourists which had been claimed. Further, he argued that even large attendance figures did not necessarily mean new financial injections.

The second argument was that although the City of Culture event would bring some wealth to the city, this wealth would be enjoyed only by a select few Capitalists in the city centre. In the *Focal Point* documentary for instance, Brendan McLaughlin argued;

'the people that make from the tourists coming through the city are publicans, cafe owners, wine bar owners, are shops and so on. That money doesn't go back into the city. That money I can tell you goes into private pockets.'

(BBC 1 Focal Point 1990 11/12/90).

The individuals in charge of service outlets were therefore identified as the main beneficiaries of the event.

Third, it was pointed out that to the extent that working class Glasgow would benefit at all from the 'trickle down effects' of the event, this would come only in the form of the worst type of service jobs. Sean Damer argued for instance;

'There is no research, no training, no development in the service industries, it's all go-go dancers, cocktail waitresses, barmen, floor polishers, office cleaners and jobs like that.'

(Sean Damer BBC 1 Focal Point 11/12/90).

These jobs, were among the worst paid, most menial, most seasonal, and least unionised. They involved the longest hours, and often employed only women on a part time basis. They also tended to have the poorest health and safety conditions (Torrington 1988, Damer 1990a ch 1). Anticipating the logical response to this complaint, Damer added;

'it is patently a dubious proposition to state that such jobs are better than no jobs, even though unemployed Glaswegians may want them desperately.'

(Sean Damer 1990a p13)

Finally, concern was registered with the degree to which economic recovery was sustainable. Glasgow's regeneration, it was argued, had placed too much emphasis on 'superficial' projects. By this was meant the fact that image building and marketing based regeneration was inherently risky. Any success Glasgow had achieved was the result of its ability to keep ahead of the latest fashion trend, but it was debatable for how much longer it could do this. Glasgow would eventually lose its ability to be 'avant garde' and at this point, tourism and investment would 'dry up' and the 'bubble would burst' (McLaughlin 1990).

This point of view was popularised by Lord Roy Jenkins of Hillhead who, aside from Workers City, probably voiced the

concern louder than anyone else. In an address to the Royal Philosophical Society of Glasgow on April 11th 1990, Jenkins, warned that 'Glasgow has ridden high on a mounting wave of fashion...but fashion, by its very nature, is a fickle jade. Glasgow has been tremendously *à la mode* for the past five years. But *à la mode* by its very nature cannot remain constant' (Jenkins 1990). This lecture was reported in the press and its merits debated. Grigor (1990 p6) for example, quotes Pat Lally saying;

'What has happened in Glasgow has nothing to do with fashion and to think that is wholly inaccurate. We have seen dramatic changes in the city but people have worked for it and we know where we're going. Glasgow is still moving up, and it will continue to do so.'

There was real concern therefore, about how sustainable Glasgow's regeneration was, and to what extent any improvements were just a 'flash in the pan'.

In summary, focussing on features which were ignored in official accounts, and what was absent in rhetoric about regeneration activities, critics argued that commentary on the city during 1990 had painted a false picture. Official accounts suggested that Glasgow was a great place in which to live; a city where spectacular events occur, where there is lots to do and see, and which is currently undergoing an economic revival. Critics in contrast, identified Glasgow as a city suffering from extreme levels of multiple deprivation. Recent regeneration efforts had made only a small contribution to the local economy, bringing wealth to a select few capitalists, and touching the working classes only in the form of the most menial

jobs. Further, the extent to which benefit would be experienced on a long term basis was questionable.

Critics then, questioned the council's uncritical application of the language of 'regeneration'. It seemed that *any* form of capitalist development was being hailed as a mark of success; something to celebrate. Critics raised the question of the morality of applying the language of regeneration when Glasgow still suffered so many problems, when the council's regeneration efforts were making little impact, and when there were so many problems inherent in the changes which were being made. Thus the council were criticised for failing to recognise the full extent of Glasgow's problems.

13.5 Cranhill Arts Project

In this final section, attention turns to the activities of the Cranhill Arts group as a case study of the way the debate outlined above worked its way into thought and action at 'grass roots' level. Cranhill Arts Project was initiated in 1981 by Alistair McCallum who remains Project Leader. Its objective was and is to teach photographic and printing skills to unemployed people in the Cranhill Housing estate, in the hope that these skills would enable them to find employment. It is worth noting that their involvement in various protest events, such as anti-Poll Tax demonstrations, earned the group something of a Left Wing

reputation.

As part of the City of Culture event, Cranhill Arts Project received £30,000 from the Festivals Office to put on three photographic exhibitions. The main one, called *The Glaswegian exhibition*, forms the centre of attention here. Two trainee photographers were employed for this exhibition, and with the assistance of other members of the group, some 30,000 photographs taken of which 300 were selected for the main exhibition. This took place in a small shop in the City Centre between October 1st 1990 and November 17th 1990. Eleven 'satellite' exhibitions were also put on in community centres in Easterhouse, Drumchapel, the Gorbals, and Maryhill, among others. In addition, 53 smaller exhibitions were distributed to British Consulates in over forty countries.

The following analysis is based principally on an interview with five members of the group (including McCallum and the two trainee photographers) in Cranhill on October 17th 1990. It is also informed by several meetings with George Glen of the group in September 1990, attendance at the main exhibition on October 17th 1990, and an interview with George Glen broadcast on Radio Scotland's *McGregor's Gathering* on 16/10/90.

In the interview, the group criticised the council's image building tactics. Using arguments similar to that deployed above, the degree to which Glasgow *really* had changed was questioned (note that numbers are used to identify respondents);

1. 'Nothing's changed, it's just a cosmetic job of making them look good. I mean, even if you go along the motorway you'll notice that all the houses facing onto the motorway have been done up.'

2. 'Neon lights on the top of the Towers in Cranhill.'

3. 'It's just like dampness everywhere.'

2. 'The thing is, the dampness is still in these houses. It's just a cosmetic job. It looks good on the outside and that will do for us thanks very much. And you know, we've to be that bloody grateful that they've put a bit of cladding [roughcaste] or something on the front of your house and think whall.'

4. 'Cosmetic surgery. Pure cosmetic surgery. It fools nobody.'

(Cranhill Arts Project Fieldwork Interview 17/10/90)

The most striking feature of this extract is the reference to Glasgow's regeneration as 'cosmetic'. This notion, and that of cosmetic surgery, implies change only in surface appearance, which is aimed merely at beautifying. The idea that the city had improved in any substantial way is ridiculed. Moreover, it is argued that the rationale for image building is not to improve life for residents in the city, but to make councillors 'look good'.

Three improvements were cited by the group to reinforce their claim. First, reference was made to the modernisation of those houses in Cranhill which face onto the M8 motorway (the main road into the city from the south) whilst the ones behind had been ignored. The consequence of this selective renovation was that passers-by would be led to believe, falsely, that *real* changes had been made. Second, reference

was made to Neon light designs which had been placed on top of towers in Cranhill. Finally, it was argued that the problem of dampness had been neglected in the modernisation that had taken place. The council were more interested in creating a pleasant exterior than attending to the underlying problem.

The resentment felt by members of the group towards the council's rhetoric was described as the motivating force behind the *Glaswegian exhibition*. This exhibition set out to dispel the 'myth of regeneration'. It suggested that there was a significant difference between the 'real' Glasgow and the 'Glasgow' which the council was keen to promote. A conscious effort had been made by the group to capture in photographs, what they considered to be the 'real' Glasgow; 'a city of poverty, of hardship, of no job and no hope'. That the District Council was keen to 'paper over' the real Glasgow was suggested to be a sign that;

'they couldn't give two fucks about us. As far as they're concerned we're just wasters from the scheme'.

(Cranhill Arts Project Fieldwork Interview 17/10/90)

The following extract encapsulates the bitterness with which the council's rhetoric was received and summarises the nature of the *Glaswegian exhibition* :

1 'Well, the whole point of our photographic survey has been to show Glasgow the way we see it, not the way the District Council would like you to see it this year.'

Interviewer 'What's the difference.'

2 'Oh there's a big difference.'

3 'Glasgow tends to be typecast in photographic exhibitions. People look at its architecture rather than its people. Hopefully what our exhibition shows is the reality, the people and not the buildings.'

2 'It's the majority, the majority.'

4. 'The way of life.'

2 There really are about four big schemes in Glasgow; Easterhouse, Drumchapel, Castlemilk, and here in Cranhill. These are the places where the real Glaswegians stay.'

1 'They always try to show the nice side of Glasgow, whereas what we're trying to show is the truth. We're trying to show the real Glasgow, not the one everyone else seems to be talking about.'

2 'Yeah it's quite apparent to Glaswegians.'

3 'There is unemployment, poor housing, everything.'

4 'We are trying to show things as it is. We aren't showing a nice close up North Kelvinside. We're showing a wee woman picking up a potato, looking at it and thinking, can I afford to buy that. These things are happening every day, you know, so whether they like it or not, we consciously set out to capture Glasgow as we see it. That's the sort of thing we are used to and are supposed to accept, but we're not willing to accept. And what we are saying is right, if our so-called leaders are doing nothing about it, and making out that it's not really happening then we need to make a noise ourselves.'

(Cranhill Arts Project, Fieldwork Interview 17/10/90)

The last section of the final passage of the above extract is revealing. It highlights the group's feeling of being let down by Glasgow District Council. Their project represented an attempt to 'make a noise' about their problems. This was only necessary however, because their 'so-called' leaders were not lobbying on their behalf, nor were they even recognising the hardships faced. This logic also appeared in explicit accounts on the political

nature of the project;

1. 'The thing is, people say that we're dead political, but I mean *life* is political. You know, everything about it is decisions taken at a higher level that are imposing our conditions on us. You know somebody commented to me in the shop, 'oh this exhibition is dead political'. But a picture tells its own story, we're not putting any text on it so you know if they don't like what they see then that's tough.'

2. 'The truth is uncomfortable if you've got a guilty conscience'.

3. 'It's getting more and more political around here. There's more restrictions on the working classes each year, and you've got to become political to survive I think, especially since your own people often forget who they are and what they're there for.'

2. 'You've got to attack the political processes to make the changes.'

13.6 Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to reflect upon a third area of debate during 1990. Central to the argument developed was that the District Council played an active role during the year, in promoting images of Glasgow as a city undergoing regeneration. In terms of the quality of life on offer, images were circulated of Glasgow as a city where spectacular events occur, and a place full of things to do and see. With reference to the City of Culture event, and Glasgow's investment portfolio, rhetoric also appeared suggesting that Glasgow was regenerating economically. The narrative of the 'rebirth' of the city was inscribed onto the urban fabric in the form of a number of 'icons' of revival.

Through a consideration of the arguments advanced by Workers City and the Cranhill Arts Project team, it was suggested

that opposition to the official line was evident during the year. The image of Glasgow as a good place in which to live and work was ridiculed. Glasgow's working classes still suffered substantial hardship. To promote an image of regeneration was to fail to recognise and respect those problems. It was to conspire in the creation of a 'myth'.

Further, whilst officials were triumphant in their praise of *any* return of capitalist activity to the city, critics pointed out that the regeneration efforts contained many flaws. It was doubtful if the benefits claimed by officials would materialise. If they did, it was doubtful if they could be sustained over a long period of time. To the extent that wealth was created, it would only serve to benefit the owners of the service outlets in the city centre. Its contribution to the lives of the working classes would only be in the form of the worst type of jobs. The saturation in the language of regeneration of *all* capitalist development was challenged.

In questioning the status of official accounts of both the health of the city and the effects of specific regeneration projects, critics were keen to restore the hardships faced by the local working classes to the centre of debate. As long as their 'leaders' believed that positive changes were occurring, there could be little hope that the problems faced by working class people would be addressed. In the absence of such attention, the working classes would have to take it upon themselves to displace the idea that Glasgow really was 'miles better'.

Notes

1. In turning to the economic impact of the City of Culture event, it should be noted that an official report on the economic impact of the event was published in May 1992 (Myerscough 1991). The findings of this report will not be included here since attention is primarily focussed upon *debates* which took place *during* the year.

2. I make no pretensions in this context to have the type of architectural knowledge which would be required to categorise developments into particular 'signifying' genres. Nevertheless, following the Evening Times article, I would still claim that among the many things these new developments signify is the economic 'rebirth' of the city.

3. The notion of Bermecide Feast merits closer attention. This phrase was used by Jeff Torrington (1988) in a discussion of the City of Culture event. It is part of the fable of the Arab 'Bermecide' who decides to throw a feast for the starving 'Schacabac'. For his own amusement however, he serves nothing but empty plates and cups. The Schacabac however, wise to the joke, astonishes the Bermecide by pretending to eat and drink with great enthusiasm. Having consumed several imaginary cups of wine, he feigns drunkenness and proceeds to assault the Bermecide. The message conveyed is that Glaswegians are wise to the illusionary banquet that is the City of Culture event, and will in time exact reprisal.

CHAPTER 14 - OVERSPENDING AND QUESTIONS OF FINANCIAL COMPETENCE

14.1 Introduction

The final area of debate which will be examined in this thesis is that which took place over the financial competence shown by District Council officials in their administration of the Special Fund. The emphasis in previous chapters has been upon the merits of *what* the council spent money on. In this chapter, the key issue raised is *how* the council spent money.

In examining the question of financial competence, reference has to be made to Harvey's (1989b) claim that in following image building strategies, local government increasingly moves from a managerial role to an entrepreneurial one (see Chapter 3). What this means, Harvey suggests, is that instead of simply 'administering' public money, local government is becoming increasingly *speculative*. Putting on a major leisure or cultural event is a costly exercise. In order to minimise this cost, councils can seek to recuperate money from ticket sales, private sponsorship or television rights. In this way, the net cost of the event can be contained within feasible limits. However, since no one can predict how many people will buy tickets, or how much private sponsorship will be attracted, there is always an element of risk. This is why place marketing events are organised by the public sector; the risks are often too

great to tempt the private sector.

With the turn towards image building therefore, council expenditure becomes increasingly speculative. Officials are always open to the risk of spending significant amounts of public money with no guarantee that the net cost will be within acceptable bounds. When mistakes are made, councils can end up leaving significant debts which the rest of the population is left to pay in future years. Indeed, such was the case with the Montreal Olympics in 1976, and the Sheffield Student Games more recently (Darke 1991).

The issue of financial competence is therefore, intimately connected with large cultural and sports events designed to boost the image of a place. Within the context of these remarks, discussion in this chapter will examine three aspects of the Glasgow case. The first section (section 14.2) deals with the general debate which took place over the way the Special Fund had been discharged. The specific case of the Glasgow's Glasgow exhibition is then examined. In section 14.3, the financial background to this event is explained, and Workers City's argument outlined. This argument was based upon *demand* for the event. In the final section (section 14.4), it will be argued that the main thrust of debate in the media over Glasgow's Glasgow, avoided Workers City's critique. Its focus was instead upon the cost of setting up and running the project. As a consequence, the 'real' issue of whether

the council ought to have been funding a *speculative* event *per se* , was not addressed.

14.2 Exhausting the Special Fund

The structure of funding for the City of Culture event has already been explained in chapter 6. It was pointed out at that juncture, that of the £35 million spent by Glasgow District Council, £15 million represents money spent specifically because of the event. This Special Fund was the one which created most controversy during 1990. The Special Fund was first established in the summer of 1988 from balances saved over previous years. Jean McFadden, who was City Treasurer at the time, announced in her budget speech in January 1989, that all the money in this fund would be available for City of Culture expenditure. She also suggested however, that through sponsorship and ticket sales, much of the initial outlay could be recovered. The net cost to the council would be something in the region of £6 million (McFadden 1990).

As the year progressed however, it became clear that the entire £15 million would be used and that the Special Fund would be fully exhausted. This overspend was principally the result of poor attendances at the council's major events, and those privately organised events which the council had agreed to underwrite. In other words, having taken the risk of investing in a number of speculative projects, the council found that in

some cases the gamble did not pay off.

The event which attracted most controversy in this regard was the Glasgow's Glasgow exhibition. This event was based upon the premise that some 1.2 million people would attend paying £4 a head. In the end however, only 500,000 visitors came and a loss of £4.6 million was recorded. The visit by the Bolshoi Opera also managed to sell only 14.6% of its tickets at the original cost. It exceeded its budget by £1 million. Frank Sinatra's concert also made a loss when only 11,000 of the expected 30,000 turned up. This cost the council £665,000. Finally, the Summer Theatre Season, underwritten by the council, generated only 11.5% of expected income leaving the council with a bill of £135,000 (all figures from McFadden 1990, and Steven James of the Glasgow District Council - see Appendix 1).

By the middle of August 1990, it was apparent that the above projects were going to overspend. At this point, pressure was brought to bear on officials to make the extent of the loss public. For example, when Pat Lally admitted that some £13 million of the Special Fund had been used, the Leader of the Conservative Party in the city, John Young, called for a detailed assessment of the finances of the year. This was rejected by Lally. Amidst intense media speculation, however, on the amount that might be spent by the time the year was out, both Pat Lally and Bob Palmer were called upon to defend City of Culture expenditure (see for example Whose Culture, Radio Clyde 2 23/8/90 and Scotland Today,

The basis of the defence put forward was that despite problems up to that point, expenditure on the event would still remain within the £15 million limit. Whilst no money would be saved from the budget as initially hoped, there would be no need to use resources from other council budgets to pay for the event. This was the position the council maintained for the duration of the event. And so, at the end of the event, in a summary statement in the Glasgow Herald on December 28th, Treasurer Jean McFadden, recognising the fundamentally *speculative* nature of the event, argued;

'In the summer of 1988, we decided to set up a Special Cultural Fund of £15 million from balances prudently saved over previous years. The intention was to provide bridging finance. In my budget speech in January 1989, I said that one feature of the event would be the need for finance to cover planning and production costs before sponsorship and box office revenues became available. At that time, we suggested that we might recover much of our initial outlays, leaving a net cost to the council of £6 million. But we couldn't be sure how much of the £15 million would come back. We knew that there would be failures as well as successes, but none of us had the gift of second sight. We now know that we were over optimistic. The 'bridge' turned imperceptibly into the Festivals Office's spending target, and it now looks as if nothing will come back.'

(Jean McFadden 1990 p13)

Workers City however, advanced a different interpretation. The added cost, it was argued, would have to be paid for from other budgets. This would mean a reduction in the amount which would be spent on more needy things. In an article in the *New Statesman and Society* in August 1990, James Kelman argued;

'As much as 10% of the general services' budget has been 'milked' from every council department in Glasgow except housing.'

(Kelman 1990a p33)

In Workers City's 1990 publication, Kelman added;

'Over the coming years, the cost of this one P.R. exercise will have grave repercussions for the 'ordinary' cultural life of the city. The money must come from somewhere. Major cuts will take place in those areas precisely concerned with art and culture. The public funding of libraries, art galleries and museums; swimming baths, public parks, and public halls; all will be cut drastically. What has been presented as a celebration of art in all its diversity, has become an actual assault on the artistic and cultural life of the city.'

(Kelman 1990d p130)

Similarly, Norman Bissell also argued in the 1990 publication;

'Make no mistake, the people of Glasgow will be paying the price for years to come in council services and jobs and by the sale of the Green if they aren't stopped first.'

(Bissell 1990)

By the 'sale of the Green', Bissell was referring to council plans to sell off parts of Glasgow Green to private developers. Glasgow Green is a large and famous public park. The argument was that so bankrupt had the council become, they were resorting to selling public facilities to raise money.

A second argument was also developed towards the end of the year when it was announced that Glasgow District Council's Poll Tax requirements were to rise by 41%, from £92 to £131

in 1991 (The Bulletin, November 1990 p1). In the end, council reserves were brought in and the rise was reduced to £123 (The Bulletin, Feb 1991a p1). The reasons advanced for the rise were that support from Central Government had been reduced in real terms and that the number of 'non-payers' was expected to rise by 47,000 during 1991.

Workers City however, advanced an alternative explanation.

On the Focal Point documentary on Glasgow 1990 (BBC 1 11/12/90), Brendan McLaughlin stated,

'Pat Lally says he is going to milk it for all it's worth for the people of Glasgow. Infact the Year of Culture has milked Glasgow and I don't know what the Glasgow District Council are going to do now because they are skint and . it's not because people are not paying their Poll Tax, it's because they've bailed out every hyped up cultural jamboree that they've initiated and even some that they haven't initiated.'

(Brendan McLaughlin Focal Point BBC 1 11/12/90)

The need for the District Council to raise its Poll Tax requirements therefore, was explained through reference to their 'bailing out' of 1990 events. Not only would Glaswegians face a reduction in services and a loss of public facilities as a result of the event, they would also have to pay larger Poll Taxes. Glaswegians would have to pay for the incompetence of council officials in both ways.

In summary, the general failure of speculative investments by the council was less severe than in cases such as the Sheffield Student Games noted above (which lost over £20 million - Darke 1991). Losses certainly occurred, and

questions were raised about the wisdom of certain events. Workers City argued that losses would result in reductions in services and higher Poll Taxes. They made an effort to deploy the kind of rhetoric which is more commonly associated with disasters on the scale of the Montreal Olympics. The general contention advanced by officials however, was that mistakes could be contained within the existing budget. No debts would be left for future generations to pay. The event was *speculative*, but the stakes were not that high.

14.3 The Glasgow's Glasgow exhibition

The Glasgow's Glasgow exhibition was conceived and eventually organised by Glasgow architect Douglas Clelland. Clelland had approached the council in late 1987 with the suggestion that a major exhibition on the city's history might function as a good tourist attraction. Accepting this proposition, the council set up a Public Limited Company called The Words and The Stones to arrange the exhibition.

Recognising that the initials of this company combined to spell 'TWATS', this was subsequently changed to 'Glasgow's Glasgow'. The exhibition was to run from April to November 1990. The company was Directed by Douglas Clelland.

The council also decided that four of its key officials would sit on the board of Glasgow's Glasgow. These four officials were; Bill English (Director of Finance), Julian Spalding (Director of Art Galleries),

Chris Purslow (Director of Architecture) and James Rae (Director of Planning). The rationale for their recruitment was to ensure the *financial* success of the event. It was presumed that Clelland had the expertise to produce a *culturally* successful event. Finally, Touche Ross, an accountancy firm, were employed as financial advisors. They were to have no executive role at board level but were to monitor spending and report regularly to the board.

The financial arrangement for the event was that the council would cover the initial cost of setting up the exhibition. This involved the shipping and insuring of items borrowed from other museums and the renovation of the building in which the exhibition was to reside. Income from a projected figure of 1.2 million visitors at £4 a head however, was expected to cover both the setting up and subsequent operational costs. Therefore, the council would be recompensed, and the event would be largely self financing.

As early as May 1990 however, fears were arising in the press that the £4 entrance fee was too high and that the projected number of visitors might not be reached. Local journalist, John Kerr, reported in the Evening Times on May 29th for instance;

'Glasgow's Glasgow is in danger of becoming Glasgow's white elephant... Predictions were for 500,000 visitors, but after six weeks there have been only 82,000.'

(John Kerr Evening Times 29/05/90)

According to Kerr, Douglas Clelland had decided as a consequence, to introduce new ticket prices. Whilst the £4 single ticket was retained, a four day pass at £12.50, and a £35 family ticket were introduced. In early July 1990 however, the council decided that attendances were so low that a reduction from £4 to £1 in the single ticket was required. The hope was that this would boost the number of visitors to the extent that at least some of the 'loan' would be recovered.

At this point, Touche Ross advised the board that a loss of £2.9 million could be expected. Despite boosting numbers to over 500,000 in the end, the reduction in ticket prices did not prove sufficient to improve upon this figure and indeed, the overall loss eventually turned out to be in the region of £4.6 million. All loans the District Council had paid to Glasgow's Glasgow were changed to grants and all outstanding debts were covered by the council. From being a self financing initiative, the exhibition had proven to be a financial disaster. It had consumed almost one third of the £15 million Special Fund. This figure is equivalent to £10 from every Poll Tax payer in the city.

The loss of £4.6 million created enormous press controversy. Workers City, the Council, Douglas Clelland, and Touche Ross, all offered conflicting accounts of who was to blame. Attention in the remainder of this section will focus upon Workers City's argument. The positions of the other participants will be considered in

the following section.

Workers City's focus was upon the poor attendance at the exhibition. At this juncture, reference has to be made to the role of Glasgow's Glasgow in the Elspeth King Affair. It will be recalled from Chapter 8, that Elspeth King had been asked by Julian Spalding to help out with the organisation of the event. King had resisted, questioning the feasibility of the project. She pointed out that the event reflected nothing of Glasgow's 'real' culture. Given this, she doubted whether the event could attract 1.2 million people at £4 a head. She suggested that if the event could not be cancelled, it should at least be reduced in scope.

When it emerged that only 500,000 of the anticipated 1.2 million had attended the exhibition, and that the bulk of this 500,000 had come only after the initial fee of £4 had been reduced to £1, Workers City referred to King's opposition to the project from the outset. The main problem with the event was that it was misconceived in thinking that it would attract substantial numbers of Glaswegians. Despite King's warnings, it went ahead with projected attendance figures which were completely unrealistic. Glasgow District Council were to be blamed for not heeding the advice offered by King.

The following quotes, offered by David Kemp in a field interview, and Sean Damer on the Focal Point documentary, illustrate this line of thinking:

'It's a total farce when you think of it. Here you have a situation where Lally was warned, you know, you don't want to do it, it's not gonna work, it's not what people are interested in... And he just ignores it and steams ahead regardless...At the end of the day the evidence is clear, Elspeth King was right and Lally was wrong. He called it wrong and must pay the penalty.'

(David Kemp Fieldwork Interview 11/1/91)

'Everyone knows that Elspeth King and Michael Donnelly predicted all this before the thing even opened. When I've read and heard all of Clelland's public pronouncements, I'm absolutely staggered that the City Fathers, and Mothers, could possibly have bought such a package of mince from such a clown...If they make such wrong decisions as employing such balloons, then they have to be held responsible for it.'

(Sean Damer Focal Point BBC1 11/12/90)

Workers' City therefore, accepted that the *speculative* nature of the project was central to the financial problems it had encountered. The financial success of the event was dependent upon its ability to attract customers. That it failed was a reflection of the failure of the council to recognise its limited market potential. The council were to be criticised for failing to take Elspeth King's advice that the event would not prove attractive to Glaswegians.

14.4 The main debate

Despite the interventions of Workers City, the main debate on the overspend took place between the council and Touche Ross. The first major statement made by the council was in early October 1990. At this point, the council were asked by Glasgow's Glasgow to make available a

final £700,000. It was pointed out that the exhibition would have to close if this money was not forthcoming. Nearly £500,000 of this money was owed to over 200 firms who had contributed to the exhibition. The additional £200,000 was to cover routine costs to keep the event going until its scheduled closure in mid November. Having already agreed to cover previous debts, the council decided that enough was enough. A major enquiry was launched into why the exhibition had run into so many financial difficulties.

The Glasgow Herald reported on October 5th 1990, that the council's Chief Solicitor, Ian Drummond, had drafted a letter to Glasgow's Glasgow Director, Douglas Clelland, asking him to provide information on five major aspects of the exhibition: the relationship which existed between the company and Touche Ross; the warnings Touche Ross had given the board and the nature of the board's response; why the extra £700,000 demanded in October had not been mentioned in prior contact with the council given that it was known then that it would be required; on what authority people who were buying items for the exhibition were doing so; and explanations for all overspending on previously agreed budgets (Auslan Cramb Glasgow Herald 5/10/90 p1).

Two aspects of this list emerged as significant in terms of the structure of the debate which subsequently took place. First, the council were clearly interested in the way in which money had been *spent*. Points four and five, asked about expenditure upon exhibition items and why previously agreed

upon limits had been exceeded. This contrasted with Workers City's concentration upon *income*. Second, the council were evidently keen to establish whether responsibility for monitoring expenditure lay with Touche Ross or Glasgow's Glasgow.

The press at this point also started to investigate the matter and Council Leader Pat Lally and Treasurer Jean McFadden were asked to account for the added expense.

The Glasgow Herald on October 2nd quotes Lally as follows;

'The general view is that we're totally dissatisfied with the performance of the company in containing expenditure within the budget laid down without referring to the board or ourselves on any deviation from that.'

(John MacCalman Glasgow Herald 2/10/90b p1)

In this quote, one sees Lally focussing upon the *expenditure* on Glasgow's Glasgow. Further, despite the fact the the report had still to be completed, Lally was clearly blaming Glasgow's Glasgow. Absent in council rhetoric however, was any acceptance of blame on their behalf. For example, the Evening Times on October 2nd quotes Lally blaming the company and distancing the council from the event;

'We're not responsible for the organisation of Glasgow's Glasgow... We're dealing with the company only at arms length.'

(Anonymous (b) Evening Times 2/10/90 p3)

More specifically, efforts were made to distance the council's four key officials who sat on the Glasgow's Glasgow board from the overspend. In the two reports in

the Glasgow Herald and Evening Times referred to for instance, Lally and Jean McFadden are quoted suggesting that these four people could be excused on the grounds that they had been kept in the dark about expenditure on the event by both Touche Ross and Douglas Clelland :

'Of acute embarrassment to the city's Labour administration is the fact that four senior council officials, including Director of Finance Mr. William English, were appointed to the board to protect the council's £3.7 million investment in the project. Both Labour leader councillor Pat Lally and City Treasurer Jean McFadden were at pains to point out that the officials involved had been fed inaccurate information.'

(John MacCalman Glasgow Herald 2/10/90 p1)

'Councillor Lally added that the four senior council officers on the Glasgow's Glasgow board, including the council's Finance Director, had not been given up-to-date financial information.'

(Anonymous (b) Evening Times 2/10/90 p3)

At this juncture however, the Leader of the Liberal Party in the city, Robert Brown, demanded to know why the four council officials were not being asked about their involvement. In response to Brown's demands, the council agreed that the role of the four officials would be examined, but that this would be undertaken in a separate enquiry at a later date.

There was concern in some sections of the media at this point, that the council were trying to absolve themselves from the overspend and locate the blame either with the Glasgow's Glasgow company or Touche Ross. The Evening Times

for instance, on October 5th 1990, devoted its Editors Comments section to the incident and protested;

'Did councillors virtually give Glasgow's Glasgow a blank cheque without monitoring its spending ?....The council's current enquiry is asking questions about the relationship between the board and its financial advisors and why budgets were overspent... but these are all questions which should have been resolved between the council and Glasgow's Glasgow before the exhibition had started. As far back as September 1989 there was unease among councillors about Glasgow's Glasgow. That's why four senior council officials were appointed to its board.... They were there to protect the city's interests. It seems scarcely credible that such experienced officials, appointed when alarm bells were already ringing, would fail to discover over the next year that all was not well with the central event of 1990.'

(Editors Comments Evening Times 5/10/90 p2)

The council's report was completed in early November, and on November 10th the Glasgow Herald revealed its core findings. The focus of this report was once more on the *overspending* on exhibition items that Glasgow's Glasgow had been guilty of. Little mention was given to the fact that attendance at the event had been low. Blame for the overspend was located principally with Touche Ross. Touche Ross had agreed, at the start of the event, that they would take full responsibility for the financial side. The article quoted Town Clerk Steven Hamilton saying,

'It is quite clear from my examination of the documentation that the financial management of the event was the sole responsibility of Touche Ross.'

(Benedict Brogan Glasgow Herald 10/11/90 p1)

Further, it was suggested that Touche Ross had given warnings about the impending financial disaster only

after it was too late. For instance, Touche Ross were aware in July 1990 that the event would overspend by more than the £2.9 million they had predicted in June. Despite this, they never informed the council or the board of Glasgow's Glasgow until October. This lack of warning by Touche Ross had led Douglas Clelland and the four council officials to spend more than planned on exhibition items. The article quoted Steven Hamilton saying;

'I do not think that any action could justifiably be taken by the council against the board of Glasgow's Glasgow, who on the evidence I have seen, deserve to be exonerated.'

(Benedict Brogan Glasgow Herald 10/11/90 p1)

The report concluded by suggesting that the council should seek a 'substantial reduction' in Touche Ross's £109,700 fee on the grounds of the firm's poor financial performance'. In opposition to Pat Lally's criticism of the Glasgow's Glasgow company, and in particular Douglas Clelland, the official report laid blame with the financial advisors. This appeared to exonerate Douglas Clelland.

Not surprisingly, this was the position which Douglas Clelland was also advancing. He had been put in charge of running a cultural event. He was an architect, and not an accountant and could not be expected to carry responsibility for the financial side of the event. This is why Touche Ross had been hired. Why would financial consultants have been employed if financial responsibility lay with him?

By removing blame from the four key council personnel, the official report fuelled the speculation in the media that the council was engaged in a 'cover up'. Two articles in particular, advertised as 'exclusives', in the Evening Times (MacKenna 1990) and Glasgow Herald (Ritchie 1990) on November 13th and 19th respectively, challenged the council's report by referring to a forty page document Touche Ross had drawn up describing their role in the incident. Murray Ritchie's article in the Herald will be referred to here since it represented the most detailed statement on the issue to appear during the period.

Ritchie began his article by noting that some councillors in Glasgow feared that the official report into the incident represented an attempt at a cover up;

'The report has led to suspicions among some councillors that a cover up is in prospect and that responsibility for colossal sums of public money being wasted will be white-washed. The fact that the council had several senior figures on the board of Glasgow's Glasgow has led to suggestions of a public scandal being conveniently swept aside.'

(Murray Ritchie Glasgow Herald 19/11/90 p20)

Ritchie proceeded by noting that Touche Ross had compiled a report which offered a different account of events from that which officials were circulating. He argued;

'If Touche Ross succeeds in vindicating its conduct it will place a heavy duty on council officials and Glasgow's Glasgow's management to explain how so many millions of pounds could be lost so easily, despite clear warnings.'

(Murray Ritchie Glasgow Herald 19/11/90 p20)

Using this argument, Ritchie attempted to dispute the council's allegation that Touche Ross had not given the Glasgow's Glasgow board sufficient warning. In contrast to the official line, Ritchie asserted that Touche Ross *had* warned Douglas Clelland, on at least five occasions, that the exhibition's finances were not healthy. He mentioned specific dates as a means of validating the argument.

First, on October 26th 1989, concern was registered about the projected visitor numbers. Second, on January 26th 1990, Touche Ross pointed out that the council was about to overspend by £200,000 because it was buying more exhibits than it had budgeted for. Third, on January 29th contact was made regarding the lack of heed Douglas Clelland was taking regarding Touche Ross' reservations. Fourthly, Touche Ross complained to Clelland on February 26th, again that the company was spending more than it ought to, a theme which was repeated in a final letter dated March 26th. It was noted in these letters that the company was in danger of going insolvent and trading illegally. Once more, aside from the first letter, emphasis was upon Clelland's overspending on exhibition items.

On the basis of these observations, Ritchie concluded;

'Thus, the board had been warned that spending was running at far too high a level even before Glasgow's Glasgow had opened...Some councillors take this to mean that Touche Ross's warnings were ignored and that they are now being made the scapegoat.'

(Murray Ritchie Glasgow Herald 19/11/90 p20)

Thus, media conjecture around the period implied that the council was attempting to absolve itself from blame by making false allegations about the role of Touche Ross. The logic of their conjecture was that if Clelland had been warned, if he had passed onto the board all the information he had received from Touche Ross (as he claimed), and if the four council officials were all part of the board, then the only conclusion to draw was that they had failed to take proper heed of Touche Ross's advice. The council had acted in other words, in an incompetent way with public money.

Despite further council enquiries, no developments beyond the conflicting accounts provided in the official report and Touche Ross's reply reached the public forum. A summary statement on the matter was provided by Pat Lally in the BBC 1 Focal Point documentary. On this programme, he acknowledged that the council had 'bought a lemon' from Douglas Clelland, but insisted that they were not to blame. He accused both Clelland and Touche Ross of 'failing totally to meet the objectives they set themselves'. Once more, Lally, unlike the official report, implicated Douglas Clelland. He pointed out, however, that the council could not be held responsible for the unprofessional nature of certain people. He further ruled out taking legal action against either party, suggesting that 'it is simply not possible'.

14.5 Summary

Council officials in Glasgow were accused of financial incompetence in the way they handled the Year of Culture budget. A number of major events consumed substantially more money than the council had initially planned. Instead of using only £6 million of the £15 million Special Fund, all £15 million of this fund had been exhausted by the end of the year. Despite council claims that no *additional* resources had been used, Workers City argued that this financial incompetence had resulted in cut backs in service provision in other areas. Further, overspending on City of Culture projects was suggested to have been responsible for the increases in the Poll Tax levied in 1991. In otherwords, Workers City were trying to invoke the kind of rhetoric more often associated with the failure of major speculative events.

Controversy surrounding the financial incompetence of council officials found a focus in the Glasgow's Glasgow exhibition. Whilst initially conceived as a self financing exhibition, Glasgow's Glasgow eventually cost the council some £4.6 million. Heated discussion took place in the city regarding who was to blame.

Workers City pointed to the failure of the event in generating expected visitor levels. Council officials had been warned by Elspeth King prior to the opening of the exhibition that the project had limited market

potential. They had ignored this advice and ought to pay the price as a result.

The main thrust of the debate however, took place between the council and Touche Ross. It focussed not on *demand* for the exhibition but on the careless way spending upon exhibition items had taken place. The council blamed Touche Ross, Financial Advisors to Glasgow's Glasgow. They had failed to warn the council that spending had exceeded income. Pat Lally, Leader of the Council, also placed the blame on Douglas Clelland (architect and Director of the event), for selling the council something he had no ability to deliver.

Some local journalists however, accused the council of trying to cover up for its own incompetence. Quoting a response made by Touche Ross to the council, it was suggested that the council had indeed been given plenty of warning. A belief circulated as a consequence was that the council was trying to absolve itself in general, and four of its key officials in particular, from responsibility.

That the main debate focussed upon the question of *spending* as opposed to *income* is significant. By making *demand* for the event central to their account, Workers City drew attention to the inherently *speculative* nature of the project. The council had taken a gamble on a certain number of visitors turning up. This gamble had failed to pay off. By 'financial incompetence' was meant poor judgement of the market potential of the event.

With a focus upon *over-spending* however, the main debate made the problems encountered 'local' to the exhibition. The fact that the event was *speculative* in character was irrelevant to the problem. By 'financial incompetence' was meant a careless handling of the Special Fund. The problem was not identified as being endemic to the type of enterprise undertaken. A more cautious approach to spending would have solved the problem.

Consequently, whilst the council had to defend themselves against the allegation that they had failed to properly monitor the event, much bigger questions about the wisdom of investing in *speculative* projects *per se* were not discussed. Debate over Glasgow's Glasgow therefore, focussed upon circumstances specific to the exhibition and ignored the possibility that problems existed with the *nature* of the project in the first instance.

CHAPTER 15 - CONCLUSION

15.1 Introduction

An effort must now be made to bring together the different strands of argument developed in the previous fourteen chapters, and to propose an overall *thesis*. This chapter is structured into four sections. First, a summary of the theoretical and historical context within which the Glasgow case study was set will be presented in 15.2. Second, the four debates identified in the empirical chapters will then be summarised and interpreted in the light of this context (section 15.3).

In chapter 1, it was pointed out that accompanying the *cultural turn* in Social Theory has been a politicisation of research. Academics have been called upon to empower marginal groups by offering them a means to a critical voice. From the preceding chapters, it should be apparent that this has translated itself herein, into a concern with conflict over the meaning of the City of Culture event in Glasgow. Given the political orientation of the work, it is appropriate that the final word be given to the *marginalised* group, in this case Workers City. Attention will therefore be given thirdly, to *Workers' City's conclusion* (section 15.4). Finally, in section 15.5, possible areas of future research stemming from this study will be identified.

15.2 Theoretical and historical context

The theoretical and historical context within which the analysis of Glasgow's regeneration efforts are to be understood was outlined in the first three chapters. Six major points might be drawn from these chapters. First and foremost, the local state in the post-war era is best conceived of in terms of the national Fordist Keynesian state apparatus. Fordist Keynesianism *regulated* and thus successfully *reproduced* capitalist social relations by bringing labour and capital into a compromise. The growth of working class consciousness, which manifested itself so forcefully in the early twentieth century, was *contained* within the Fordist Keynesian compromise.

This compromise was premised upon a territorially based ideology of productivity growth. A consumption fund for workers would be made available through taxation of the wealth producing classes. However, since the magnitude of this fund was contingent upon wealth creation, capitalist growth within individual nation states was seen as in the best interests of both capital and labour.

A division of labour was identified within the United Kingdom between local and central government. Central government has traditionally negotiated a corporatist politics between capital, seeking to reduce taxation levels, and labour, seeking to enlarge the magnitude of the workers' consumption fund. The main responsibility of

local government however, has been that of providing the means of collective consumption. In Harvey's (1989b) terms, urban governance under the Fordist Keynesian system is 'managerialist' in character; involving the administration of a consumption fund raised mainly at the centre. For local government then, improving the *living place* of workers emerged as its central *raison d'être* under Fordist Keynesianism.

Second, three major concepts were identified in Chapter 1 as being central to the recent *cultural turn* in Social Theory; the metaphor of the text, interpretive communities, and cultural politics. In applying the notion of the metaphor of the text to studies of the meaning of social practices, it was suggested that meaning is best thought of as being *created* rather than intrinsic to social practices. Social practices are *read* or *constructed* by the observer. From the idea of interpretive community, it was suggested that readings of text are indeed *social* constructions. Members of interpretive communities share the same language. Language is central in providing a lens through which social practices are understood.

From these observations, I wish to assert that the managerialist role so characteristic of the local state under Fordist Keynesianism represents a *social construction*. It is *sensible* only within the context of the rise of a particular interpretive community in the

late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and its practical manifestation in the post-war era. This interpretive community was based upon the social democratic principle that the competitive private economy should be augmented with a welfare state system geared towards wealth redistribution. Further, central to the reproduction of this interpretive community has been the *language* of collective consumption. The terms of reference within which discussion on the local state has taken place has been set by the *discourse* of collective consumption. The local state is judged on its ability to provide services to the local community.

Third, turning attention to Glasgow, it was argued that Glasgow has historically been associated with a Leftist political stance. From its Liberal political foundations in the late 1800s, Glasgow evolved through the events of Red Clydeside as a city whose political complexion was increasingly becoming socialist. The Independent Labour Party, with a highly effective **Ward** organisation system, managed to turn the conflicts of the period 1915-1919 into a general **class** based protest.

From 1933, the Labour Party has dominated local politics. The main area of activity of the Glasgow Corporation prior to local government restructuring in the mid 1970s, was housing. In line with Glasgow's rapid industrialisation in the period 1700 - 1900, the city witnessed rapid rates of urbanisation. By the early twentieth century, this had

created a problem of severe overcrowding in the inner city area. Solving this problem became the major political issue facing the Glasgow Corporation. Improving the *living* conditions of the local working classes emerged as the Corporation's *raison d'être*.

Despite the rhetoric of the Red Clydeside period, the Labour Party throughout the period 1933 to the mid 1970s was anything but politically radical. Savage (1989) argues that the Labour movement in Glasgow was largely *apolitical* throughout this period, in relative terms. Instead of regarding the local state as an institution to be *used* to further political ends, the Labour Party situated itself within the local state. It consequently conducted debates within rather conservative and narrow terms of reference. Despite this, as the evidence of Workers City's rhetoric testifies, an important oral history of the Red Clydeside period still exists in the city. Glasgow's political colour is still regarded in some quarters as radical socialist.

Given the above comments, it is not surprising to find out that it was primarily within the terms of reference of the ability of the council to provide the means of collective consumption that it was evaluated. One of the major initiatives undertaken by way of solving the housing problem was the Slum Clearance of housing in the city centre, and the relocation of population to housing estates in the periphery of the city. This initiative is

widely judged to have been a failure. Criticisms focus upon the extent of public consultation. The views of the people were not taken into account. Power was over-centralised. The Labour Group had become *detached* from those it was claiming to represent.

Fourth, it was suggested that the Fordist Keynesian system has been restructuring nationally in the context of (among other things) the United Kingdom's altered role in the New International Division of Labour (Frobel et al. 1980). Part of the Conservative Party's response to this altered position has been to constrain public spending. Wealth has to be created before it can be redistributed. In the present context, this has manifested itself in increased central government control of local authority expenditure. For members of the *traditional* interpretive community, this has been *read* as producing a fiscal crisis; with strong demands for service provision being unable to be met because of weakened local authority abilities to generate revenue. The consequence is then, that the *traditional* constituency of the local state already perceives itself to be under attack.

Fifthly, it was pointed out that with the demise of the economic foundations of the older industrial conurbations in most advanced capitalist economies, the local state has itself redefined its role. In Harvey's (1989b) terms, there has been a shift in urban governance, from *managerialism* to *entrepreneurialism*.

From its traditional role as a service provider, the local state has become more interested in the regeneration of the local capitalist sector. From providing welfare for the community, the local state now regards its role as including the provision of welfare for capital.

We might conceive of this shift as being characterised by the emergence of a new interpretive community. At the heart of this community is the *discourse* of economic regeneration. A new language has emerged setting new terms of reference within which the performance of the local state is to be judged. From being evaluated using criteria such as the number of council houses built, the length of waiting lists for houses, and the speed with which housing repairs are made, the local state is now talked about in terms of the degree to which it has managed to reverse images of urban decline, generate tourist visits, attract property investment, and create new jobs.

Finally, by referring to the argument put forward by Cox and Mair (1988), it was pointed out that in restructuring its sphere of activity, the local state opens itself up to a *legitimation problem*. At root, this legitimation problem rests upon the fact that part of the workers' consumption fund is diverted to assist the local capitalist community. The local state has to *justify* why the criteria of satisfying the consumption needs of the local working classes is being placed secondary to generating

economic activity. This justification is made all the more problematic as a consequence of the climate of opinion (outlined above) now in existence suggesting that now is a time of fiscal crisis. Not only is money being diverted *from* the workers' consumption fund, but this is taking place at a time when the magnitude of this fund is itself being reduced.

Drawing upon the notion of *cultural politics* it can be argued that the legitimation problem faced by the local state in this context is at base a *contest over meaning*. If one *deconstructs* the legitimation problem, it can be argued that conflict derives from the coming together of two different interpretive communities, each with their own *socially constructed* concepts of what the *proper* role of the local state ought to be. One interpretive community has its roots in traditional notions of the local state as an *agent* of the community, existing to improve the *living* conditions of the labouring classes. This community works with a reified concept of wealth redistribution and the public provision of items of collective consumption.

The other sees economic regeneration as being in the general interests of the community. The interests of capital are to be supported and thus the local state as an agent of capital is considered to *make sense*. This community works with a reified concept of capitalism. The health of a city is *inevitably* contingent upon the degree to which it

participates in the wider capitalist economy. The outcome of the legitimisation problem is dependent upon the extent to which each community can gain control over key moral gatekeepers (the press for instance), and achieve hegemonic status for its particular social construction.

15.3 The Glasgow case study

These theoretical points can be brought to bear in the interpretation of the conflicts which emerged in Glasgow during 1990 over the City of Culture event. The argument I wish to develop in this section is that the four areas of debate identified in the empirical chapters, can be read as part of an attempt by Glaswegians to *make sense* of the movement by Glasgow District Council from a *managerialist* to an *entrepreneurial* approach to the discharge of the workers' consumption fund. The debates can be regarded as the junctures at which tension between the two interpretive communities became so great that a *cultural politics* was launched.

The movement by the council towards *entrepreneurialism* was described in Chapter 3 as being within the context of the erosion of Glasgow's manufacturing base. More specifically, the defeat of the Labour Group at the 1977 local elections was suggested to be the key date at which the Political Left began to chart out a new role for the council. In Chapter 4, this new role was seen to be powered by the vision of Glasgow as 'Europe's first

post-industrial city'. Through innovative public-private partnerships, witnessed not least in the activities of Glasgow Action, Glasgow was to embark upon a service based regeneration. This was to have at its heart, image building and the *re-aestheticisation* of the city. Indeed, *image consciousness* was perhaps the most conspicuous sign of the new look council. If Glasgow could overcome a number of negative stereotypes, tourists, investors, key personnel, and the professional classes might patronise it. Regeneration would follow.

In Chapter 6, it was noted that the language of regeneration pervaded official rhetoric on the City of Culture event. This event was to be *used* as part of the city's image building programme. The city's cultural budget was to be used to make *big statements* about the city's health and the quality of life it offered.

Generating jobs was defined as its *raison d'être*. Each of the four debates will now be considered in the context of the thesis outlined. Seven conclusions will therein be drawn; five related to the specific nature of the cultural politics which surrounded the transition from *managerialism* to *entrepreneurialism*, and two related to the wider implications of this politics.

15.3.1 Conflict over the cultural substance of the event

The bulk of the project concerned itself with debates

in Glasgow over the cultural substance of the City of Culture event. Because of the methodological approach used, justification for concentrating so heavily upon these debates cannot rest on the claim that it was the most salient issue raised. Nevertheless, from experience in the field, I would contend that the so called 'whose culture' debate was indeed a central area in which the District Council had to legitimate itself to the community during 1990. Hopefully, the status of the information sources cited has confirmed this.

In Chapter 7, it was pointed out that three types of criticism were levelled at Glasgow District Council, during 1990 vis-à-vis the cultural substance of the City of Culture event. These criticisms focussed upon the dichotomies; high versus working class culture, commercial, yuppified culture versus morally inspired Left Wing culture, and effeminate culture versus *masculine* Glasgow (the *No Mean City* imagery). In each case, the City of Culture event was suggested to have little relevance to Glasgow's working classes.

The feeling that the council had championed a yuppie culture at the expense of the people's radical socialist culture (the second dichotomy), was shown to have had material expression in the case of the Elspeth King Affair (Chapter 8). King was portrayed as the champion of the people's culture. Her commitment to Glasgow's working class history and outspoken attacks on the Glasgow's Glasgow

exhibition, the icon of the yuppie culture, were suggested to have been the cause of the refusal of the District Council to give her a job she was widely expected to get. The mass of controversy which surrounded this affair gives weight to the claim that the cultural debate was a central one in Glasgow during 1990.

What emerges as significant from the *whose culture* debate is the fact that the performance of the District Council was evaluated within the terms of reference of its *traditional* role. That is, the event was *read* as an exercise in the provision of items of collective consumption. It was judged according to the degree to which it satisfied the consumption needs of the local working classes. And against those criteria, it was deemed to have been a failure.

Further, in Chapter 9, it was argued that in trying to legitimate themselves, council officials formulated a response to critics *within the terms of reference* of the provision of items of consumption. This is despite the public rhetoric of officials elsewhere which suggested that the event was to be *milked* for economic regeneration and thus was to be judged against different criteria (Chapter 6).

Central to their efforts to resolve the legitimization problem was the discourse of devolving decision making power down to community level. The event *did* cater for the tastes of Glaswegians since it was *co-authored*

with the community. Officials merely acted as *enablers*, allowing energies already in communities to be channelled to good effect. Some of the practical manifestations of this discourse were examined in Chapter 10. Through a consideration of three City of Culture projects, the mechanics of devolving power from artists to communities was examined.

That the council sought to defend themselves within the traditional terms of reference of urban *managerialism* is significant. It suggests that they themselves were caught between the two different interpretive communities. In some respects they approached the event as an exercise to be used in urban regeneration. In others, they approached it as a celebration of local culture.

In Chapter 11, alternative ways in which the legitimization problem might have been resolved were examined. Through a consideration of alternative City of Culture projects, and the positions taken up by some media commentators, two legitimization strategies were outlined. First, still within the language of providing collective consumption, some groups accepted that the City of Culture event was introducing something alien to the city. Nevertheless, they continued to insist upon the legitimacy of the event *as a cultural event*.

For instance, the high cultural elements of the event were suggested to be in the public good. It was

patronising to suggest that Glaswegians could not appreciate high culture. 'Difficult' art was of interest to all sections of the community. Second, through the example of Josefina Cupido's Residency in the Gorbals, it was pointed out that the *authentic* study of the music of ethnic minorities was considered to be something Glaswegians would be interested in. Bringing the culture of 'others' to Glasgow offered locals a *unique opportunity* to experience things they might not otherwise have been able to.

The second strategy examined drew upon the language of *urban entrepreneurialism*. The City of Culture event was not designed to cater for the tastes of Glaswegians. It was a tool to be used in Glasgow's regeneration. As such, it was more the tastes of investors, tourists, and the professional classes which were catered for. This was legitimate as generating jobs had greater priority than providing culture for the local community.

That these two alternatives did not figure so prominently in official accounts is significant. With respect to the latter, it can be concluded that the discourse of economic renewal did not achieve hegemonic status in Glasgow during 1990. The cultural debate, both in terms of the position of critics and officials, continued to take place within the terms of reference of the provision of items of collective consumption. The traditional *managerialist* interpretive community forced an event

instigated on the basis of the new *entrepreneurial* interpretive community, to be accountable within traditional terms of reference.

In order to understand why the discourse of devolving decision making power down to the community emerged as central to official accounts, in preference to the alternative strategies of legitimating the event *as a cultural event*, it is necessary to set the event within the context of the historic failure of the council's housing policies. As noted above, the policy of Slum Clearance, the construction of Peripheral Housing Estates, and the Overspill Policy, were all criticised for taking place without proper public consultation. The local Labour Group were making major decisions about people's lives, without giving them a proper say. Throughout the 1980s, this problem was addressed in a new housing policy which involved the devolution of decision making power to communities (as mentioned in chapter 3). The culture of devolution is one that has a strong presence in Glasgow in the recent past. A consciousness continues to prevail among the Labour Group therefore, that public perception is sensitive to the question of over-centralised control.

The first conclusion to draw then, is that *urban entrepreneurialism* did not necessarily gain hegemonic status in Glasgow during 1990. Debates about the cultural substance of the City of Culture event still took place within the context of the success of the District Council

in catering for the consumption needs of the local population. The main criticism of the event was that because it was being used as a vehicle for urban regeneration, P.R. value systems were dictating what type of culture was being celebrated. In trying to resolve this legitimisation problem, a discourse emphasising the role of the community in the definition of the cultural substance of the event was drawn upon by officials.

15.3.2 A misprioritisation of precious local authority expenditure

The second area of debate examined, related to the extent to which money ought to have been spent on culture, when so many other pressing issues required attention. Central to this debate was the problem faced by the working classes in the peripheral housing estates. Houses were in urgent need of repair. It did not make sense to spend money on a 'cultural jamboree' when other priorities existed.

Once more this criticism was formulated within the terms of reference of *urban managerialism*. The District Council was evaluated against its performance in the provision of items of collective consumption. By showing bad judgement in terms of what the workers' consumption fund was spent on, it was deemed to have failed. Culture was something secondary, to be taken seriously only when the more important problems had been addressed.

Whilst important, this debate did not progress far. This,

in part, explains why Chapter 12 is the shortest in the thesis. The major reason for this was that the District Council thwarted the critics efforts by *siding* with them and displacing the debate up to the level of Central Government. The council knew that other problems were more important. It would have spent City of Culture money on housing if it had been allowed. Central Government restrictions however, meant that the Special Fund had to be spent on culture alone. The cultural budget could not be used to pay for housing repairs. The council were therefore, not responsible for the apparent insensitivity to the living conditions of the local working classes. .

This argument was refuted by critics who suggested that its credibility was dubious because the council seemed to *embrace* restrictions rather than *resist* them. The council could have found *creative* ways of spending the money on housing. That they did not highlighted the *real* extent to which they cared about the problems faced by those on the peripheral estates.

The legitimization problem therefore, was once more rooted in the fact that part of the workers' consumption fund was being spent using criteria set by economic regeneration. Previously, housing was the main issue in the city. That so much was being spent through the cultural budget appeared strange when set against traditional standards. It is only when set in the context of the use of culture in economic regeneration that *sense* can be made of it.

The legitimization problem however, was not resolved by appealing to the narrative of economic regeneration. The second conclusion which can be made is that the terms of reference of the 'traditional' local state were once more retained. The council sided with critics, and the problem was displaced to higher tiers. This strategy was seen by critics as an *excuse*. The council had made no real effort to overcome the restrictions.

15.3.3 Glasgow's regeneration - image versus reality

The third major debate, examined in Chapter 13, focussed on the legitimization problems which stem from *urban entrepreneurialism's* emphasis upon image building. As noted in Chapter 4, image building has proven to be core to Glasgow's economic regeneration campaign. During 1990, the City of Culture event was seen to have been used (with the help of Saatchi and Saatchi) to promote Glasgow as a city where spectacular events occur and where there is lots to do and see. Image building strategies were also suggested to have extended to council rhetoric on the health of the local economy. The City of Culture event was portrayed as *successful* in generating a service base to Glasgow's economy. Further, using property investment levels as an 'indice' of regeneration, Glasgow was dubbed 'the £2.5 billion pound city'. The narrative of Glasgow's regeneration was also suggested to have inscribed itself

onto the urban landscape in the form of a number of 'icons' of redevelopment.

In examining the nature of the legitimization problem which surrounded this upbeat rhetoric, two distinctive criticisms were identified. First, the image of Glasgow as a city restored to health was seen by some as constituting a deliberate attempt by officials to disguise the *harsh realities* of life as it is lived by the local working classes. It was being used by officials to legitimate their own regeneration efforts; those efforts *had* been successful and the council were to be congratulated. Further, by displacing the city's problems from centre stage, the language of regeneration functioned to play down the potency of the voice of the working class.

This legitimization problem can be considered to be another example of the cultural politics of the transition from *managerialism* to *entrepreneurialism*. Whilst image building is considered to be a tool for regeneration within the interpretive community of *entrepreneurialism*, it is *read* as a tool for neutralising the voice of the working classes within the interpretive community of *managerialism*. This is hardly surprising. An implicit assumption within *managerialism* is that the working classes have problems and need assistance. The key question raised is what type of assistance? When this assumption is challenged then so too is the whole

managerialist enterprise. Restoring the *fact* that Glasgow was not *Miles Better* therefore, emerged as central to the discourse of *managerialists*.

A third conclusion is therefore, that in adopting an image building strategy, the local state opens itself up to a new legitimization problem. Instead of being seen as an institution which *identifies* problems and works towards their solution, the local state has to justify why it appears to be *ignoring and concealing* the plight of those it exists to serve.

Second, a somewhat different line of argument also appeared in Chapter 13. Any and every form of new capitalist enterprise in the city was *celebrated* by officials as a development *for the better*. The language of regeneration was applied uncritically. Critics however, called into question the nature of the economic revival Glasgow was making. Criticism of the City of Culture event was examined in Chapter 13. Claims for the economic benefits of the event were suggested to be exaggerated. In addition, any recovery which had been made would be ephemeral. Image building constituted a risky strategy since solid economic foundations could not be established on the basis of Glasgow's 'fashionableness'. Further, any money that did come in would only benefit the owners of service outlets in the city centre. To the extent that working class Glasgow would be affected, this would only be in the form of low quality jobs.

The importance of these lines of criticism is that they are situated *within* the language of *entrepreneurialism*. The council is evaluated not within the terms of reference of its success in providing the means of collective consumption, but in terms of economic regeneration. In contrast to the above debates, in which discussion took place within the interpretive community of *urban managerialism*, these criticisms signify the development of a new terrain of debate. From a politics of consumption, the local state has now become the site of a politics of production.

A fourth conclusion to draw then, is that there were signs in Glasgow, that at the other side of the transition from *managerialism* to *entrepreneurialism*, there exists a new terrain of production based politics. This terrain of debate rests upon the problematisation of official economic regeneration strategies. In particular, the tendency for officials to reify *all* capitalist social relations is questioned. The uncritical application of the language of regeneration has to be resisted. The legitimisation problem therefore, is rooted in the relations of production.

15.3.4 Financial Incompetence

The final debate examined related to the financial competence councillors exhibited when discharging the City of Culture budget. It was noted in Chapter 14, that

a new *style* of council spending comes into existence with the transition towards *entrepreneurialism*. This style is best characterised as *speculative*. This contrasts with the planned way in which money is spent under *managerialism*. Place marketing events, for instance, are highly expensive. Public expenditure on them is often reliant upon a return on investment, from ticket sales for instance. The consequence is that all the risks of the market place have to be absorbed by the public purse. As Harvey (1989b p7) notes, the activity of the local state;

'is entrepreneurial precisely because it is speculative in execution and design...It is therefore, dogged by all the difficulties and dangers which attach to speculative, as opposed to rationally planned and co-ordinated development.'

It was argued that the failure of speculative ventures was a definitive characteristic of the City of Culture event. Instead of the planned expenditure of £6 million, all £15 million of the Special Fund was used up. Workers City was keen to argue that this mistake was responsible for Poll Tax rises in 1991, and reduced service budgets. Council officials nevertheless, pointed out that whilst the Special Fund had been exhausted, no additional monies would be required. Certainly, the problems Glasgow faced were relatively trivial in comparison to such events as the Sheffield Student Games, and the Montreal Olympics (Darke 1991). Nevertheless, the rhetoric of 'financial disaster' which surrounded these other events was deployed by Workers City.

The specific case of the £4.6 million loss on the Glasgow's Glasgow exhibition was considered. This event managed to attract only 500,000 of the expected 1.2 million visitors. Further, most of those attended only after admission prices had been reduced from £4 to £1. Workers City argued that the overspend had been caused by market failure. That is, they recognised that the inherently *speculative* nature of the development was the source of the problem. The main thrust of debate which took place in the city however, focussed upon overspending by the organisers, and who was to blame for this. By focussing on supply side factors, the central problem of the speculative nature of the development was ignored. The loss could be blamed upon localised circumstances.

The fifth conclusion then, is that the financial competence of Glasgow District Council constituted a legitimisation problem during 1990. The question of financial incompetence takes on a new intensity with the movement from *managerialism* to *entrepreneurialism*, but these new conditions attached to council expenditure, were not made the centre of debate. In trying to come to terms with the loss of money on the Glasgow's Glasgow exhibition, the terrain of debate focussed upon supply rather than demand problems. The consequence was that the loss was written off as the function of localised circumstances. The problem would not have occurred if the fund had been

better *managed*.

15.3.5 The forces of the local state

Whilst a great many different actors were shown to have taken up positions regarding the City of Culture event, Workers City and the affiliated critics were identified as the main voice of opposition. Workers City was comprised of a number of political activists and local cultural celebrities. Further, the affiliated critics included University Lecturers and a journalist and documentary maker. Combined, it is evident that leading the political opposition to the City of Culture event were a number of Left Wing intellectuals, acting outwith the confines of the council.

This is an important observation if the question of the forces comprising the local state is considered. The importance of intellectual/media stars in generating political discussion appears to be a growing phenomena. This raises a number of questions regarding the difference in the type of politics the rise of this political force brings. From the experience of this project, a number points can be made.

First, the emergence of the Left Wing critique in Glasgow was significant in that it provided a new language within which the council's actions could be understood. Glasgow is going through a period of great economic and political change. People caught up in the middle of this change

find it difficult to make sense of what is happening around them. It is unlikely, in the midst of this confusion, that a serious challenge to the official line will be made. The intellectuals' critique was important in so far as it offered people a coherent alternative. The intellectuals provided the imagination and inspiration required to translate official rhetoric in a way which allowed feelings of resentment to be better understood. Further, their status in the community afforded them access to the media and thus rendered their opposition more potent.

Second, as intellectual critique becomes a more significant political force however, discussion tends to move from the practical to the theoretical. Certainly, in Glasgow during 1990, the intellectuals, speaking outwith the local state, set an agenda for debate based upon *grand* questions taking to do with the *theoretical* basis of the local state. One issue which this raises, is the degree to which the intellectual critique actually reflected a voice of opposition which had deep roots in the community. One might raise the question in the present context for instance, whether the 'whose culture' debate would have been pursued with such vigour by ordinary community groups. Why was the Easthall Residents group's argument (Chapter 10) not for instance, given more weight.

The sixth conclusion to be drawn then, is that the major source of opposition to the City of Culture event came

from a number of Left Wing *thinkers* acting outwith the council. Their relative independence was important in allowing them to develop a coherent *alternative* to the council. Further, their status in the community gave them access to the media and thus inflated their voice - significantly enough to worry the council. Nevertheless, the concern must be that the rise of the intellectual critique generates a politics which prejudices the terms of reference within which debate takes place, effacing as a consequence, the *real* voice of the people.

13.3.6 The politics of the locality

Finally, some comments are required on the whole notion of the politics of the locality. Traditionally, the local state has been regarded as a somewhat dull political arena, more concerned with collecting refuse and repairing pavements than substantive political debate. As this thesis has testified however, with the rise of *urban entrepreneurialism*, among other things, this has changed and the locality is now the site of political struggle. The local state has become a thoroughly politicised institution.

In understanding this change, reference has to be made to the declining fortunes of the older industrial regions. This change has brought new hardships for the working classes, manifest not least in large and persistent unemployment levels. For people in these localities

however, no clear target for the release of 'tension' seems to present itself. In moving towards *entrepreneurialism*, the local state can be regarded as providing that target. It provides a concrete entity for local people to attack. It provides one domain in which locals can try to exert influence, in an environment which seems to be outwith their control. Hence the intensity of debate in Glasgow over such things as Elspeth King's non-appointment to the post of Keeper of the city's museums.

The growth in the intensity of local politics however, has a negative side. Urban *entrepreneurialism* is a phenomenon of great importance in all Western Cities. If the response of the Left takes the form of a plurality of independent localised conflicts, the danger is that whilst small concessions may be gained, hegemonic status for *entrepreneurialism* will be secured overall. This leads to the final conclusion. There is clearly a need for the Left to consider its response to *entrepreneurialism* and to question whether opposition at larger geographical scales is necessary. As Harvey notes;

'The problem is to devise a geopolitical strategy of inter-urban linkage that...shifts horizons away from the locality and into a more generalisable challenge to capitalist development...Working class movements...have proven to be quite capable of commanding the politics of place, but they have always remained vulnerable to the discipline of space relations.'

(Harvey 1989b p16)

15.4 Workers City's conclusion

Given the political basis of this thesis, it is appropriate to give Workers City the last word. As one of the powerless group during 1990, this was a privilege they rarely enjoyed. Perhaps two points emerge as significant in this regard. First, arguing that officials had no democratic basis for their actions, Workers City concluded that Glasgow's approach to regeneration represented a *betrayal*. The representatives of the people had sold them out;

'We live in a time of sell out and betrayal, where elected representatives of the people publicly proclaim their shame for our 'inglorious past'...and instead prefer to play the sycophant to monarchs our ancestors strove to abolish, while rehabilitating the reputations of some of the worst exploiters and profiteers of the past.'

(Donnelly 1990d 121)

In a live discussion with Pat Lally on Glasgow's Labour Group (Night Flyte STV 4/7/91), James Kelman pointed out to this end, that it is important to distinguish between representing the people, and being put into power by the people only to make decisions in an autonomous way.

The idea that the Labour Group had detached itself from its democratic basis was inflamed by a feeling among members of Workers City that officials had refused all the group's efforts to have a proper debate. Not only had they failed to consult the public when organising the event, but they refused the public a forum to establish dialogue.

In Chapter 8, this point was shown to be a central one in the Elspeth King Affair. It will be recalled from this chapter that Michael Donnelly was sacked by Pat Lally, for criticising the council's decision not to appoint Elspeth King to the post of Keeper of Glasgow's Museums. Council employees were not allowed to talk in public about council activity. Only Council Leader Pat Lally, could talk in public. This was considered by members of Workers City to be the antithesis of democracy.

This argument was also a consistent feature in all of James Kelman's important pronouncements on the year;

'People are being castigated for daring to criticise the Year of Culture; officials and politicians react as if those who attack the enterprise are attacking the city itself. Critics are treated as traitors to the cause... But it is no good ordering ordinary folk to stop thinking for themselves. Politicians and officials must recognise that Glaswegians are currently faced with a battery of issues and will continue drawing *general* conclusions.'

(James Kelman 1990c 7)

'While freedom of speech is under attack elsewhere in Britain, people should not be surprised to find it a 'problem' here also. Elspeth King is denied the right to defend herself publicly... Lally has also barred his own council officials from commenting upon the affair. Yet officials who fall into line behind him can talk to anyone they like...Lally dismisses critics as 'these dilettanti', 'well heeled authors and critics' and 'professional whingers'...'an embarrassment to this city and all its cultural workforce'; 'those who choose deliberately to exclude themselves'; 'pathetic, factless, plank-walking anti 1990 ism'; the pro-poverty lobby; 'crypto-communists'; 'self proclaimed anarchists'; 'trotskyists'; and 'racists''

(James Kelman 1990a p33)

As the above comments indicate, much of the weight of this criticism fell on the Labour leader Pat Lally. His leadership was described as adhering to both the Soviet and American models and at times to be likeable to the actions of the terrorist. In the case of the first, Lally was crowned with such names as 'Stalin' (BBC1 Focal Point 11/12/90), and 'Commissar Lally' (Bissel 1990 p71), and Glasgow itself re-named 'Lally-grad' (BBC1 Focal Point 1990). In the case of the second, his leadership was frequently characterised as 'presidential'. He was the one making all the decisions, other councillors were mere bearers of the truth as spoken by Lally. Finally, Lally's regime was characterised as 'mafia-like' (Bissel 1990), and he was talked about as 'high-jacking' the city for his own ends (Donnelly 1990c p9). It is also worthwhile noting that the construction of the new Concert Hall (see Chapter 4) was regarded as Lally's innovation. It was labelled 'Lally's Palais'. These criticisms of Lally's style of leadership are well summarised in the following poem by Workers City's Freddy Anderson:

'Lally'

Who ever chose you to be
a Glasgow councillor of sham democracy?
You arose on the poor folk's inadequacy
Hoping, mere hoping, that Labour be better than Tory.
Yet you and your cronies carry on the same old story of
betrayal-
It's not merely Glasgow Green or the courage of Elspeth
King.
Your actions ring more of MacDonald
Traitors decades ago - and that is the core of my poem.
You change a street name to Mandela (note 1)
You act as a tyrant at home.

(Freddy Anderson 1990b 46)

The first point is then, that from Workers City's perspective, the City of Culture event represented the latest phase in the selling out of the people by Glasgow's Labour Group. The second point stems from the first. Given their disillusion with local Labour councillors, Workers City advocated a 'do it yourself' approach, in which people become directly involved in issues which are important to them (Hugh Savage, Free University of Glasgow Lecture (11/10/90), Robert Lynn (1990), James Kelman, Night Flyte STV 4/7/91 and 1990b). Trust in organised working class resistance was no longer realistic. Two generations of the 'centralist' tradition (the housing and now regeneration era), had left the group concluding that only through personal intervention could changes occur.

In ending, it is useful to cite Brendan McLaughlin's summary of the group's attitude to the Labour Group;

'The building of the housing schemes achieved a number of very far reaching effects simultaneously. It began the process of breaking up the old system of private-factoring, where young people got houses to rent next to their parents. This caused the first signs of the breakdown in the complex matrilocal system of social relations, causing many young families to become isolated in their new homes. It breached the integrity of the collective consciousness which tolerated the diverse human characteristics within the community, and gave it a sense of solidarity... The people's communities had been destroyed. It was a case of murder under trust. The great Labour traditions that became established on the Clyde assumed that the council would always be controlled by the 'Labour Party', democratic and committed to Municipalism. For an almost unbroken period of 30 years, this trust gave the Labour controlled Corporation full reign to develop the city without fully realising there was never any recognisable coherence in their policies. When the Glasgow Corporation changed to Glasgow District Council in 1975, the attitude of councillors seemed to change with it. Although they had never shown much consideration for the people, now it was as if they were

out to persecute them... How is it that in a Labour controlled, renowned city like Glasgow, which has always prided itself on democracy, is there apparently carte blanche for private speculators ?'

(Brendan McLaughlin 1990 31,35 38)

15.5 Future research directions

To complete this thesis, a number of areas for future research can be identified. These can be grouped into two types; those related specifically to the Glasgow case, and those related to the *theory* of the transition from *managerialism* to *entrepreneurialism*.

In sketching out a research agenda for future studies of Glasgow's regeneration, some background information is required. The first point to note is that Jean McFadden replaced Pat Lally as Leader of the Council in May 1992. Following his involvement in the City of Culture event, pressure mounted on Lally to quit his post. In May 1991, councillor Charles McCafferty, with the backing of five councillors publicly recognised as being on the extreme Left of the ruling Labour Group, made an unsuccessful bid to overthrow Lally. Central to the challenge was a number of incidents which occurred during 1990 including; the Glasgow's Glasgow exhibition, the Elspeth King Affair, and the sacking of Michael Donnelly. Likewise, McFadden gained power on a platform which included the twin promises - 'no more culture', and greater consultation and room for debate.

The reason Lally's political trajectory was not examined in this thesis is that whilst the City of Culture legacy was important, a great many other factors were involved. Nevertheless, it remains to be investigated, the extent to which Left Wing critique during the event stimulated a political rethink, and led to the downfall of Pat Lally. Further, it is of interest to question the position now taken by the council, under McFadden, regarding the transition towards *urban entrepreneurialism*.

It is also interesting to note in this regard, that a militant presence is currently appearing in the city, acting outwith the local Labour Party. A number of actors on the extreme Left are combining to form the latest pressure group with which the council has to contend. Chief among these is leader of the Scottish anti-Poll Tax campaign, Tommy Sheridan. Sheridan is regarded as something of a hero in some quarters in Glasgow, not least because he was jailed for six months in early 1992 for refusing to go to court over his failure to pay the Poll Tax. In May 1992, Sheridan was elected to the council and is currently trying to put together a Scottish Militant Party.

A number of research questions therefore emerge;

- 1) To what extent was Pat Lally's resolute commitment to culture led urban regeneration the source of his downfall?
- 2) What position will the council take, under Jean McFadden,

regarding the transition in urban governance from
managerialism to entrepreneurialism ?

3) To what extent did the City of Culture event function to reproduce feelings of alienation within Glasgow vis á vis the Labour group ? Is the evolution of Militant forces in the City a reflection of a rising emphasis on the *Do it Yourself Philosophy ?*

Regarding more general questions related to the theory of the transition from managerialism to entrepreneurialism, the following appear to be significant;

4) To what extent do the four areas of debate recognised to exist in Glasgow manifest themselves in other cities undergoing regeneration ? What type of mix of the four debates appear, that is, are there different emphasis on certain debates in certain cities ?

5) To what extent are the pressure groups involved in other cities similar to Workers City ?

6) How are debates resolved in other cities ? Are the same arguments used as was found in Glasgow? In particular, to what extent is the discourse of the devolution of decision making power down to the community important ?

Notes

1. The reference to 'Mandela' relates to the council's decision to rename Royal Exchange Square in Glasgow after the ANC leader, in an effort to highlight the council's anti-apartheid stance.

APPENDIX 1 - FIELDWORK DETAILS

1. GENERAL FIELD CONTACT

Worked at the Glasgow European City of Culture Festivals Office between August 1st and September 6th 1990.

2. INTERVIEWS WITH KEY INDIVIDUALS

Sam Warnock (Press Officer in the 1990 Festivals Office), March 3rd 1990.

Sam Warnock (Press Officer in the 1990 Festivals Office), September 6th 1990.

Neil Wallace (Deputy Director of Glasgow 1990), September 9th 1990.

Ian Black (Press Officer in the 1990 Festivals Office), September 9th 1990.

Jill Campbell McKay (Head of the Festivals Office Press Centre), September 11th 1990.

Anne Mearns (Deputy Town Clerk, Glasgow District Council), October 1st 1990.

Marian Pallister (Journalist with Evening Times), November 11th 1990. (Telephone Interview).

David Kemp (Freelance Journalist and Documentary Producer), January 11th 1991.

David Harding (Head of Environmental Art at Glasgow School of Art), February 22nd 1991.

George Wylie (Artist), February 22nd 1991.

David Kemp (Freelance Journalist and Documentary Producer), April 3rd 1991. (Telephone Interview).

David Kemp (Freelance Journalist and Documentary Producer), September 11th 1991.

ALSO, Financial information on the event supplied by;

Colin James (Glasgow District Council), July 8th 1991.

Ian Waterston (Strathclyde Regional Council), August 9th 1991.

3. PUBLIC MEETINGS AND DEMONSTRATIONS

Workers City demonstration outside the Glasgow's Glasgow exhibition, April 12th 1990.

Workers City demonstration outside the City Chambers over the Elspeth King Affair, June 8th 1990.

Festivals Office's unveiling of the Final Quarterly Programme, August 27th 1990.

Lecture at the Transmission Gallery organised by the Free University of Glasgow. This lecture, entitled, 'The value of rank and file, direct action', was delivered by Hugh Savage of Workers City and was chaired by James Kelman (11/10/90)

4. GROUP INTERVIEWS

As noted in Chapter 5, the activities of eighteen groups were also examined. Fifteen of these took part in the event. Groups were chosen with the assistance of Barbara Orton (Community Arts Officer at the Festivals Office) and Ian Black (on 29/9/90). All interviews were taped and transcribed and copies were sent back to the groups. In what follows, the groups involved will be identified, the date they were interviewed and the number of interviewees recorded, other contact which was made with them documented, and the amount they received from the Special Fund noted.

1. Glasgow Sculpture Studios. Interview with Gail Boarden, Director of the Glasgow's Milestones project on September 28th 1990. Contact with Boarden sustained by telephone until July 1991. (£4,000).

2. Dennistoun Central (Church Organisation). Four members of the group who had arranged 'Musical Nights' interviewed on October 1st 1990. Attended one 'Organ Evening' on October 7th 1990. (£120).

3. Easthall Theatre Group (local community group). Two members of the group interviewed on October 9th 1990. Also attended the 'Dampbusters' play at the Kingsridge Community Centre Drumchapel on September 20th 1990. (£6,750).

4. Cranhill Arts Centre (local arts centre). Interviewed five members of the Centre on October 17th 1990. Also, consulted an interview with George Glen of the group on the 'McGregor's Gathering' programme on Radio Scotland on 16/10/90. Frequent meetings took place with Glen at the Arts Centre in

early September 1990. Also, attended the Glaswegian photographic exhibition in Saltmarket St. in central Glasgow on October 17th 1990. (£33,632).

5. Drum Kitchen in the Gorbals Unemployed Workers Centre. Interviewed Josefina Cupido (Artist in Residence) on October 17th 1990. Also had informal conversation (which was not taped) with four members of the group on 13/10/90. Also attended a practice session of the Performance Group on 17/10/90. (£18,500).

6. Drumchapel Community Organisations Council (local community group). Interviewed two members of the group on October 22nd 1990. (£800).

7. Big Noise (organiser of childrens events during 1990). Interviewed leader of the group (Phylis Steel) on October 28th 1990. Also taped a radio interview with the same individual on Radio Scotland ('Head on' 25/7/90). (£163,000).

8. Cult Magazine (childrens newspaper printed specially for 1990). Interviewed four members of the group on November 10th 1990. Collected copies of the newspaper from January to December 1990. (£5,000).

9. Maryhill Arts Group (local arts group). Interviewed two members of the group on November 11th 1990. Attended a Ceramics class at which forty unemployed people received training on tile making on November 20th 1990. (£10,000).

10. Citizens Theatre. Interviewed Press Officer, Lorna Ferguson, on November 14th 1990. The Citizens did not receive anything specifically from the Special Fund but did receive a total of £400,000 from both the Strathclyde Regional and Glasgow District Councils during 1990.

11. Call That Singing (choir set up for 1990). Interviewed Sue Hillman, Director of the group, on November 22nd 1990. Also attended a practice and had informal discussion with Musical Director Joe McGinley and seven members of the choir on November 23rd 1990, (£140,000).

12. Woodlands Community Trust (local community group). Interviewed Sean Taylor (Artist in Residence) on January 28th 1991. Also attended a film show Taylor organised called 'Jungle Stories', in the Winter Gardens on 16/11/90. Also attended the 'Black and White' Photographic Exhibition at Ashley Street Primary School in Woodlands on January 28 1991. (£17,500).

13. Woodlands Festival Committee (local arts group). Interviewed Sue Kinn (events organiser) on January 28th 1991. (£2,500).

14. Partick Milestones (coalition of various local community groups led by the Partick Housing Association). Attended

a public meeting at Partick Library on January 29th 1991. Members of the coalition, Gail Boarden of Glasgow Sculpture Studios and David Harding of Glasgow Art School attended. (£800).

15. Govan Gala Day Committee (local community group). Interviewed three members of the group on January 30th 1990. (£120).

The groups not involved in the event which were interviewed were :

16. Railwaymen (British Rail Shunters). Five people interviewed on October 10th 1990.

17. Pupils at Shawlands Academy (fifth and sixth formers). Five people interviewed on November 9th 1990.

18. Civil Servants (Passport Office). Four people interviewed on November 14th 1990.

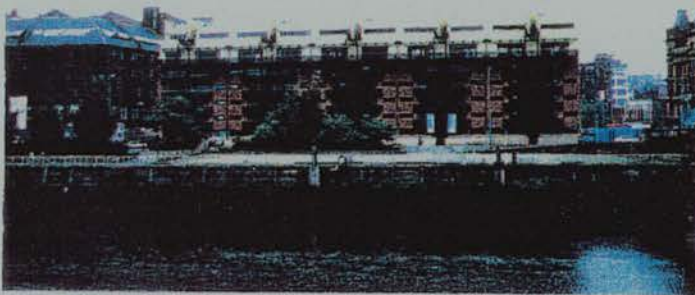
APPENDIX 2

ICONS OF GLASGOW'S REGENERATION

Photographs 6, 10, 12, and 13 reproduced courtesy of the
Public Relations Department of Glasgow District Council



Photograph 1 - Luxury waterfront housing
in Glasgow's Kingston Dock



Photograph 2 - Carrick Quay apartments
on the banks of the Clyde



Photograph 3 - Housing in Glasgow's Merchant
City

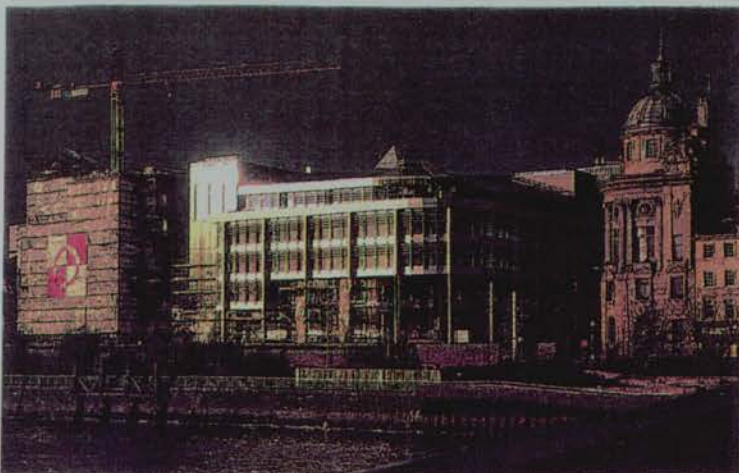
Photograph 4 - The BP Headquarters at Charing Cross



Photograph 5 - Tay House Development at Charing Cross



Photograph 6 - Japanese investment: The Broomielaw Development





Photograph 7 - Construction of the New Hilton International



Photograph 8 - Moat House International Hotel at the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre



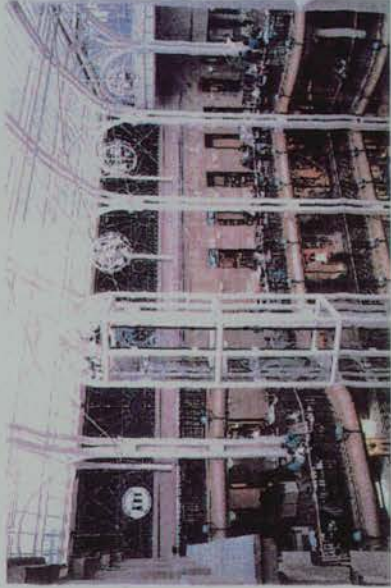
Photograph 9 - Parkhead Forge Shopping Centre in Glasgow's East End



Photograph 10
St. Enoch's Shopping Centre in the City Centre



Photograph 11 - The Italian Centre in the Merchant City



Photograph 12 - The Princess Square Shopping Centre



Photograph 13 - Selected wine bars and cafes in Glasgow City Centre

Photograph 13

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Radio Clyde 2 *Talk in Sunday* 7/1/90
Radio 3 *Letter From Glasgow* 9/3/90
Radio 4 *Today* 12/5/90
Radio Clyde 2 *Whose Culture ?* 12/7/90
Radio Scotland *Head On* 25/7/90
Radio Scotland *Good Morning Scotland* 1/8/90
Radio Scotland *Good Morning Scotland* 3/8/90
Radio Scotland *Six O'Clock News* 21/8/90
Radio Clyde 2 *Whose Culture ?* 23/8/90
Radio 3 *Third Ear* 3/10/90
Radio Scotland *McGregor's Gathering* 16/10/90
Radio Clyde 2 *Whose Culture ?* 20/12/90
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- 1) Boyle M and Hughes G (1991) 'The politics of the representation of 'the real' : discourses from the Left on Glasgow's role as European City of Culture, 1990
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The politics of the representation of 'the real': discourses from the Left on Glasgow's role as European City of Culture, 1990

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Summary *Glasgow was Europe's City of Culture for 1990. This accolade constitutes an altogether new image by which the city is represented. Such place representation raises questions about the status of the real Glasgow in a postmodern world. This paper investigates some constructions of this event by Glasgow's Left.*

In recent times, geographers have become aware of the need to take seriously what Michael Dear has termed 'The Postmodern Challenge' (Dear 1988). Ontologically, this challenge has come in the form of the thesis of the 'de-centred self' (Giddens 1987). Against cartesian notions of a transcendental consciousness, this thesis asserts a socially constructed selfhood. People, it is argued, attain only fragmented identity as they become embedded in the multiplicity of discourses which characterises social life.

One effect of this thesis is to destabilise existing categories of meaning. This idea can be expanded through reference to recent debates surrounding the defining characteristics of both modernism and postmodernism. This debate seems to centre upon the problem of representing reality. Through the force of enlightenment rationality, modernity might be said to be characterised by the problem of representation. A cultural outlook striving to clarify the proper materiality of images might be said to prevail (Lyotard 1984; Lash 1990). In contrast, postmodernism, with its de-centred ontology, can be seen to differ from modernity in that its problematic is not the representation of reality but reality itself. With the assertion that the real world is no more than a social construction, postmodernism questions the idea of apprehending transcendental referents *per se*,

'Whereas representation tries to absorb simulation by interpreting it as false representation, simulation envelops the whole edifice of representation as itself a simulacrum' (Baudrillard 1983, 11).

With reality problematised, the modernist quest to properly represent it might be thought of as reaching a new and more frantic phase¹. For Lyotard (1984), the effect is to destroy conventionally important representations (meta-narratives) and to encourage the proliferation of a plurality of more localised narratives. One might understand this in terms of the effects of ontological insecurity brought on by the inability to discriminate between 'real' and the 'imagined'. With its concomitants of stress and anxiety, one can easily see how a previously passive majority might, under such

conditions, be stimulated to act to restore a sense of ontological security (Giddens 1984, 1990). It is in such personal trials of identity that one can appreciate the significance of Lyotard's mini narratives. Following Lyotard, postmodernism might then profitably be thought as the pushing of modernity to its limits.

It is imperative to understand this outlook as not merely part of academic theory, but as a significant element in the contemporary condition of culture. One might appreciate this by reflecting upon the current significance of mass media in stretching 'codes' across time-space (Baudrillard 1983; Giddens 1990). It might be argued that to an increasing degree, people have become caught up (de-centred) in codes and images which come not from their own individual experiences but instead which are the artificial creation of the media. Baudrillard (1983) asserts that media hype has come to dominate to such a degree that culture at present is best thought of as being in a condition of hyper-reality. As images float free of any anchor back in external reality, it is possible to see how the question of coming to terms with the proper materiality of images might extend to the masses in general (Giddens 1990).

Therefore, the postmodern challenge to geography might be read as an attempt to encourage a new and more substantial concern for the way fixed categories of meaning might come under threat as they are problematised in terms of the extent to which they truly represent reality. It should be thought of as an attempt to increase geographers' sensitivity to the plurality of more localised discourses which might come into existence as people attempt to grapple with the problems surrounding the legitimacy of traditional meta-narratives.

Our concern in this paper is with representations of place. In particular, we present an empirical case study of recent attempts to change the image of Glasgow in the light of the city's role as European Capital of Culture 1990. We examine some of the ways this attempt has been contested at grass roots level in the city by reflecting upon some reactions of the Glasgow Left, and assert that such an examination might profitably draw upon the above observations on postmodernism. At a time when it has become fashionable to employ professional marketeers to create a new image for cities, usually through the use of leisure or cultural activities, it seems important that links with theories of representation are made.

Before presenting the Glasgow case study, we wish to add one crucial point. Whilst we regard the Postmodern Challenge as pointing an important new direction for geographical research, we wish to assert a continued role for modernist politics. This is consistent with conceptions of postmodernism such as the above which see it as a new intensification of the modernist problem of representing reality.

A defining characteristic of modernity is (group) contest over meaning. In a crisis of representation, a version of reality will be advanced. By excluding and displacing alternative voices it will favour only some groups, that is, will be political. Its grip over culture depends upon the extent to which the originator is able to assert its legitimation on the 'opponent'. This is often achieved through institutions which, under the control of the originator, act as moral gatekeepers. In general, the extent of hegemony will be contingent upon the power of the originator as expressed through his/her institutional framework.

Following Giddens (1984, 29), we can assert modernist politics in which power is elemental in representations of reality. Bringing all three of the above together, the code, the extent of its legitimation, and the power of its originator, we can follow Giddens in observing that structures of signification are underlain by structures of legitimation and structures of domination. It is to this thesis that we shall return in the concluding section.

Table 1 Glasgow inner conurbation employment 1971-1983

Sector	1971	1983
Primary	2,260 (0.5%)	1,710 (0.4%)
Manufacturing	172,847 (34.7%)	95,250 (23.7%)
Services	323,022 (64.8%)	304,400 (75.9%)
Total	498,129 (100%)	401,360 (100%)

Source: Glasgow District Council (1985), 31

Table 2 Percentage employment change in Glasgow's inner conurbation compared to GB and Scotland 1972-1983

Period	GB	Scotland	Inner Conurbation
1972-1975	+2.6%	+4.4%	-0.6%
1975-1978	+0.3%	-0.4%	-4.4%
1978-1981	-4.0%	-3.1%	-9.5%
1981-1983	-3.0%	-3.2%	-3.2%

Source: Glasgow District Council (1985), 32

Glasgow 1990 and its context

In August 1986, Glasgow was designated European City of Culture 1990. The Labour controlled Glasgow District Council (GDC) and Strathclyde Regional Council (SRC) immediately took charge of the event. With a budget of £50 million and liaising with over 500 cultural organisations across the city, the GDC and SRC managed in the end to piece together a programme of some 3,000 special City of Culture events—at least one taking place on each of the 365 days of the year.

Glasgow's role as European City of Culture 1990 represents the latest stage in an intensive campaign to regenerate the city. As in many other metropolitan areas in the UK, post-war Glasgow was witness to a succession of crises which threw into sharp highlight the almost overnight transformation of urban space possible under the capitalist mode of production. From the '*second city of the empire*', Glasgow became known in some quarters as the '*cancer of the empire*'.

Glasgow's post war troubles owed much to its over-reliance upon metal manufacturing, in particular ship building and mechanical engineering. A lack of investment in new technologies and the emergence from abroad of strong competition for its markets combined to erase the significance of these employment sources. With its economic core in terminal decline, Glasgow's entire manufacturing base was drawn into the downward spiral. The city endured a loss of 77,597 manufacturing jobs between 1971 and 1983 and over the same period, the service sector declined by some 18,622 jobs. Combined with employment losses in the primary industries, the net effect of this recession was that between 1971 and 1983 Glasgow lost some 96,769 jobs, nearly one-fifth of the 1971 total (Table 1).

To place this decline in context, Table 2 shows the percentage change in employment in Glasgow's inner conurbation in comparison to the Scottish and Great Britain equivalents, over four time periods. It is clear that employment losses in Glasgow were much more severe in the period 1972–1983, and in particular in the periods 1975–1978, and 1978–1981, than was the case in both Scotland and Great Britain in general (Table 2). A difference of some 4.8 per cent between Glasgow and Great Britain's percentage employment change is observed between 1975–1978, for example, and an important 6.4 per cent between Glasgow and Scotland in the period 1978–1981.

Faced with urban blight of a severe nature, Glasgow soon became aware of the need to launch a programme of economic regeneration. Central to this was the strategy of attracting capital investment from external sources. A problem soon emerged however, and it has been one that has consumed the attention of city authorities throughout the 1980's, and now the early 1990's. This problem had to do with the negative images Glasgow was projecting. As one commentator put it,

'Glasgow was seen as the City of mean streets and mean people, razor gangs, the Gorbals slums, of smoke, grime, and fog, of drunks, impenetrable accents and communists' (Taylor 1990, 2).

Such representations were proving fatal to the efforts at attracting inward investment. Glasgow soon became conscious of the need for an image building campaign as a key part of any renewal strategy. A new look, it was hoped, might stimulate key decision makers to invest in the city, and might attract important personnel by persuading them that a move to Glasgow would mean a better quality of life.

Initiated with the Clyde Fair International as long ago as 1972 (Affleck 1972), the strategy of representing Glasgow in a new and more positive light, intensified through the 1980's. At the helm in the first half of the decade was Lord Provost Michael Kelly's 'Glasgow's Miles Better' campaign. Also fundamentally tied into the strategy was Mayfest International (an annual arts festival) and the Glasgow Garden Festival (1988). In 1990, the City of Culture event represented the latest stage in this image building campaign.

The representations of Glasgow which permeate official discourse concerning the 1990 event are plural. Nonetheless, the most obvious image projected throughout the year was that of Glasgow as a new dynamic and sophisticated European capital for the development of culture. Glasgow was sold as a place buzzing with enthusiasm for the arts. One of the key phrases that was circulated in official literature on the year was a quote from Her Majesty the Queen, who in a visit to the city stated 'Glasgow leads from the front in matters artistic' (Glasgow District Council 1989, 1).

The initial strategy of using a new image to attract inward investment and to persuade important businesses and personnel to move to Glasgow has been extended in recent times to encompass a much larger objective. As the strategy developed throughout the 1980's and especially since the 1988 Garden Festival, it became apparent to GDC that tourist expenditure *alone* (stimulated by the new image) might be significant enough to generate a substantial number of service sector jobs, and so further legitimise the image building campaign. This conclusion, which was reached in a consultancy report into the economic importance of the arts in Glasgow by John Meyerscough (1988) commissioned by the GDC, stimulated official rhetoric throughout 1990 on the idea of Glasgow committing itself to regeneration through tourism, the arts and service sector provision. This is a commitment which they sold as a post-industrial objective,

'You can't stand still; you can't rely on the achievements of the past, no matter how impressive these may have been. . . . Glasgow's days as a great industrial city are over. Sad as this may seem, its consequences are clear: set out to become a great post-industrial city . . . Glasgow's post-industrial future will stem in large part from its civic heritage and cultural wealth. . . . With Glasgow perceived as a great city of culture, we can expect arts related tourism to grow—and with that comes jobs' (Glasgow 1990 Festivals Office 1990, 20).

The attempt by Glasgow to carve out a new image for itself raises some of the issues which were highlighted theoretically above. Here we have a conscious attempt, by professional marketeers, to fashion a new identity for the city of Glasgow. The new image has been constructed from the drawing board and exposed to Glaswegians in a marketing campaign for the year. Following Baudrillard (1983), we might think of this image therefore, not as one sedimented down the years in Glaswegian consciousness but one which encourages thinking about Glasgow in new terms, ie, without having direct reference back to any external reality.

For some, the new Glasgow, fashioned by professional marketeers, appears to have been one which cannot easily be reconciled with existing beliefs. Indeed, it is this problem of reconciliation which seems to have been so crucial in Glasgow in 1990. For it has proven to be a stimulus to a quite intensive response which has questioned whether the image building strategy really represents the true identity of the city. The ambiguity created between old and new seems to have stimulated Glaswegians to reflect upon the 'real' substance of the event.

Our concern in the rest of this paper is to document some of the responses in Glasgow which highlight this problem of coming to terms with the proper materiality of the new representation. The discursive positions therein occupied will also be outlined. We do this through a reflection of two responses to Glasgow 1990 by the Left in the city. We will then conclude by making some tentative observations about the way representations of place bound up with their commodification and marketing, can become territory for political contests over meaning.

Two reactions of the Glasgow Left

Two sources of reaction to Glasgow 1990 by the Left will be examined here; a 'Letter from Glasgow' by Socialist Playwright John McGrath, and the response by 'Workers City'. These reactions are useful in so much as they vary in terms of their degree of discontent. McGrath's letter is moderate in that whilst it finds difficulty in absorbing 1990 propaganda, it does not reject the year outright. Workers City in contrast, problematises the year in its entirety.

McGrath's concern is primarily with the cultural substance of the event. His vocabulary expresses well the struggle activated by the City of Culture's problematical relations with traditional beliefs. A detailed discourse analysis of this vocabulary will be presented here. Workers City, in contrast, has difficulty not only with the cultural substance of the event but also the political and economic narratives associated with it. Its rejection of the year and associated vocabulary is more clear cut. This prompts a more 'extensive' analysis of the discursive positions occupied in response to their problematisation of the materiality of the representations associated with the year. Some mention will also be given to the 'real' political consequences these positions have induced.

Table 3 Selected extracts from McGrath's letter where the 'energy' of Glasgow's working class and City of Culture 'cultural' types are being conveyed

Working class culture	City of Culture 'culture'
1 'to play Shotts which had an energetic arts committee'	1 'Glasgow's PR adrenalin was pumping fast'
2 'with a strong, organised and fruitful working class culture and cultural life blazing away'	2 'the pyrotechnicians have sparked us into the year'
3 'The vigorous and vibrant popular theatre movement of the seventies, eighties and now the nineties'	3 'with Glasgow like Famagusta, ringed with fire or at least fireworks'

Source: all quotes from McGrath 1990, 4-6

John McGrath's 'Letter from Glasgow'

John McGrath is a self-styled Socialist Playwright, who throughout the 1980's and into the 1990's, has proclaimed his professional task to involve the fight to retain the 'counter theatre' movement in what he identifies as a climate of repression (McGrath 1990). This climate of repression touched McGrath personally when his oppositional 7:84 Theatre Company was forced into silence when Arts Council grants were stopped. Working with the Wildcat Theatre Company, McGrath directed the play, *John Brown's Body*, which ran in Glasgow for four weeks during 1990. It was not funded out of the City of Culture budget. To examine McGrath's thoughts on Glasgow 1990 we turn to his *Letter from Glasgow* broadcast on Radio 3, 9 March 1990 (also published in the May edition of *The Listener* (McGrath 1990)).

In this Letter, McGrath orients his construction of Glasgow 1990 around three key concerns. First, he attempts to deal with the cultural substance of the event by contrasting it with a number of historical cultural genres in the city. Only his text on Glasgow's working class cultural heritage will be considered here. Secondly, he analyses the reasons for the existence of all of his chosen cultural regimes. Again, aside from the City of Culture 'culture', attention will be confined only to McGrath's working class culture. Finally and most significantly, McGrath represents the City of Culture event as being firmly controlled by an assertive Glasgow and thus concludes optimistically about the future development of working class culture in the city.

Let us elucidate the first of these themes by examining extracts from McGrath's discourse on Glasgow's working class culture and City of Culture 'culture' where he describes the energy of both types. From Table 3, it is apparent that both cultures are portrayed as highly dynamic. In both cases, highly dynamic physical and human processes are projected onto particular signs to convey vitality. However, a closer look at both the adjectives and the signs involved reveals differences.

If we take the actual signs being represented as 'energetic', then it is immediately apparent that whilst for the working class culture it is the cultural organisations themselves which are being portrayed as dynamic (the arts committee, working class cultural life and popular theatre movement), in the case of the City of Culture 'culture', it is not culture but the makers of culture (Glasgow, Glasgow's PR abilities and pyrotechnicians or firemakers). Elaborating using Glasgow's PR abilities as our example, it is evident that the City of Culture 'culture' is being presented here principally as form.

Content remains undetermined. PR is fundamentally all about covering up the weak points and highlighting the good points. The implication is that this is no natural culture; it is synthetic, hyped up, and manufactured.

This theme is enhanced if we look at the adjectives being projected onto these signs to convey vitality. In the case of the working class culture, terms like 'energetic', 'strong', 'fruitful', 'blazing away', 'vigorous' and 'vibrant' are used. Compare these with the City of Culture genres, 'adrenalin', 'pumping', 'sparked', 'fire' and 'fireworks'. With the former, the adjectives seem to be more substantial, implying that something lies behind the culture. The latter, in contrast, have a 'tabloid' and 'plastic' feel to them. Whereas in the working class genre content is being authenticated, once more discussion of the City of Culture 'culture' is pitched at the level of form.

The analysis can now be furthered by examining the way McGrath talks about the function of culture for each of the genres. The essence of his discourse is that the value of working class culture revolves around *culture for culture's sake*, while the function of the City of Culture strain is *primarily economic*. When talking about working class culture, for instance, he talks about its 'enriching potential', its ability to provide 'artistic sustenance'. Here we see the enabling function of culture to be that of supporting 'self enlargement'.

McGrath's discourse on the function of the City of Culture regime can be examined in a bit more detail. McGrath seeks to contextualise the emergence of this culture in Glasgow's economic recession of the late 1960's and early 1970's. According to McGrath, the City of Culture event has been primarily embraced as an economic tool to be used in Glasgow's regeneration. The argument has already been rehearsed in this paper but with McGrath we see more emphasis upon the negative role of the 'Red Clydeside' image. Glasgow's socialist traditions and reputation for effective strike action in the 1960's and 1970's, was putting off inward investment from multinational companies. Through a cultural revival Glasgow's 'redness' could be erased. Capital might once more return to the city.

This contextualisation raises two points of interest. First, it backs up his previous comments on the City of Culture 'culture', by privileging not its content but its economic potential. The worth of the culture itself is undetermined. Culture for culture's sake is not mentioned. Its functionality is extrinsic, not intrinsic to it. Secondly, by acknowledging that Glasgow's image as a militant city was causing it economic harm and that an image change was needed to attract inward investment, McGrath demonstrates a quality of reasonableness. Despite the fact that it involves criticism of his own political allegiances, he acknowledges the force of the argument for using the event as part of a campaign of regeneration; whilst problematising the content of the culture associated with the event, he absorbs it as a functional necessity.

A final and highly significant response made by McGrath to the City of Culture event involves his identification of Glasgow as its ultimate engineer. It is Glasgow that is in charge of it. Glasgow, exclusively through its own efforts, has reached out and seized the Culture Capital title. Glasgow is managing it for its own purposes. McGrath, reflecting upon the 'extraordinary number of events the Festivals Unit has generated', summarises thus,

'Does it all represent Glasgow as it really is? I think it does at least in the excess of its ambition. . . . Glasgow has shown an astonishing ability to remake itself, generation after generation, with the disrespect for established ways of thinking more often associated with an American city . . . acting as Europe's City of Culture for

1990 is going to help Glasgow to launch itself creatively, energetically and with fresh hope into a new phase of its existence' (McGrath 1990, 6).

The result of this construction allows one to understand why McGrath seems to be so tolerant. By identifying Glasgow as being in charge, any worries that the new culture might challenge the working class genre for hegemony are allayed. Whatever its provenance, this new 'culture' will be appropriated and tamed by Glasgow. The event will continue to be seen as hollow in cultural substance, as nothing more than a tool to be used by Glasgow, and Glasgow, in charge of its own destiny, will continue to promote the culture of its working class roots. Any tension then, created by accepting the City of Culture event on the one hand and problematising it on the other, appears to be resolved by drawing upon the text of Glaswegian self assertiveness.

Workers City

Workers City, a group of some forty or so Left wing activists, emerged in 1990 as the main voice of opposition to the City of Culture event. When set aside McGrath's *Letter from Glasgow* the response by Workers City appears eminently more critical. As stated above, the vocabulary used by Workers City is more clear cut and serves to undermine not only the cultural substance of the year but also its political and economic context. Given this, instead of undertaking a discourse analysis such as that attempted above, the concern here will be confined only to a broad brush outline of the various discursive positions occupied by the group.

The thrust of Workers City's critique of 1990 is outlined in their two manifesto publications, *Workers City: the real Glasgow stands up* (McLay 1988a), which was published as a run up to the year and *Workers City: the reckoning* (McLay 1990a), which was presented as a summary of their year's achievements. These books consist of articles, short stories, and poems compiled by over 30 writers. The ideas explored in the two publications became popularised throughout 1990 when various political controversies in which Workers City were involved drew enormous press attention. Whilst the concern here is to investigate the way Workers City constructs 1990, mention will also be given to some of these controversies in a bid to highlight the way constructions have become popularised and have led to real political effect.

Whilst, by self admission, both *Workers City: the real Glasgow stands up* and *Workers City: the reckoning* offer a plurality of often inconsistent constructions of Glasgow 1990, the following appear to be the most definitive themes running throughout both books; a concern to stress that the event has more to do with the interests of capital and politics than culture; that in a bid to re-present Glasgow in a positive light the reality of working class life and the richness of its cultural heritage are being systematically ignored and trashed; that the event itself will bring no economic comfort for the average Glaswegian; and that the event is confirmation of the willingness of the labour GDC to form partnerships with the capitalist system, which is to be regarded as an illegitimate sell out.

It is clear, throughout all Workers City discussions, that what is the object of criticism is not merely a series of cultural activities, but the political manoeuvres behind them. It is equally apparent that Workers City believe that this fact must be stated clearly in order to ensure that constructions have sufficiently wide parameters to pose a serious challenge. Consequently, throughout both publications one finds comments like:

'the great year of culture has more to do with power politics than culture: more to do with millionaire developers than art' (McLay 1990b, 87).

Having cleared the way for constructions founded on political grounds, Workers City then progress to criticise 1990 for sanitising the 'real' working class culture and cultural history of Glasgow, from the synthetically created 'new' image. To provide a sharpness to this distinction between 'synthetic' and 'reality' Workers City have counterposed a slogan of *There's a lot of con going on in 1990* to the official version *There's a lot Glasgowing on in 1990*. The language used to problematise the materiality of the event is patently more clinical than McGrath's. One need not tease this construction out through a detailed analysis of the discourse.

This text has taken two main forms throughout the year. First, it has simply been developed to claim that images of the central Merchant City are being sold to disguise the reality of working class life in the peripheral estates,

'With Saatchi and Saatchi's expert help they revamp the image and leave the reality behind. They propagate an image which is false. There is privation and dereliction of the housing schemes . . . there is chronic unemployment and widespread DSS poverty with the usual concomitants—drug abuse and the manifold forms of community violence. This is not the Merchant City, but this is the real Glasgow' (McLay 1990b, 87).

Secondly, it has been argued that 'yuppie' cultural activities have been thrust to the forefront subverting the city's natural working class cultural heritage. Elitist imported cultural events are portrayed as attempting to displace working class community events. A selected history of the city was presented at the Glasgow's Glasgow exhibition (a centre-piece of the year which traced Glasgow's 800 year history) in a bid to camouflage the 'bad old days' of industrial strife. People working in the cultural sphere who continue to express 'class conflict' in their work are, it is stated, being victimised.

This latter claim indeed formed the foundations of one of the biggest controversies of Glasgow 1990—the so called 'Elspeth King Affair'. Elspeth King is a social historian who throughout the affair, with the help of Workers City (Kelman 1990), was constructed by the media as a guardian of Glasgow's working class history. The affair erupted when Elspeth King, then and now curator of the People's Palace museum in Glasgow was passed over by Julian Spalding, the Director of Museums and Art Galleries, for the job of Keeper of all of Glasgow's museums, a job she was generally expected to get. An avalanche of press activity followed in which the then assistant curator of the People's Palace and subsequently member of Workers City, Michael Donnelly, catching the general sentiment, published in a local newspaper,

'The daily victimisation of Elspeth King as an *obsceance obligato* to Glasgow's year as European Capital of Culture has finally lifted the lid on a labour administration which, under the leadership of Pat Lally . . . has shown a steady abandonment of its historic commitment to socialism . . . and wish to bury facts of the past which have become inconvenient for its new sanitised, marketable image of the city. . . . This is one of the dirtiest and most immoral witch hunts since the days of McCarthy' (Michael Donnelly, Glasgow Herald 29 August 1990a, 11).

One week later Donnelly himself was sacked for making public comments incompatible with his position.

The whole event sparked off massive protests by both local media and the general public. The Glasgow Herald received some 500 letters of complaint, more than it

received for any other incident in 1990. A petition signed by 10,000 people, including local Labour councillors was handed in and a further petition signed by a number of Glaswegian celebrities was added. Workers City organised protest demonstrations outside the City Chambers and the issue was raised in the House of Commons by local MP the late Norman Buchan. Such was the magnitude of the response. We might interpret the 'Elsbeth King Affair' then, as one way in which the press managed to popularise Workers City constructions during 1990—in this case the text being discrimination against proponents of working class culture (see Kelman 1990 for example).

The third argument promulgated by Workers City surrounds the idea that the 1990 event will bring economic benefits to Glaswegians. This notion is ridiculed on a number of counts. First, it is suggested that Glasgow is simply a pawn in the capitalist game. Multi-national companies would come, milk Glasgow for all its worth whilst it was still fashionable, and then move on to abuse other cities leaving Glasgow for dead. They would also damage the prospects for small local companies in the process. Further, it is argued that even if investment does leave any legacy in Glasgow it will only serve to line the pockets of the 'haves' in the Merchant City. Finally, to the extent that it does touch ordinary Glaswegians, it will only, it is argued, serve to provide low paid, part time, menial service jobs (see here in particular McLay 1988b and McLaughlin 1990).

The flip side of this text is that not only will Glaswegians not benefit economically from the event, but that they in fact stand to lose by it. As stated earlier, it cost Glasgow almost £50 million to host the event. The bulk of this money is coming from the local and regional authorities. Therefore, it is put that the money spent on 1990, given that it is local money, should have been spent on things of greater priority. The charge made is that public money is being diverted away from needier causes to finance the 1990 events;

'As much as 10 per cent of the general services' budget has been "milked" from every council department in Glasgow to pay for the "cultural celebration"' (Kelman 1990, 53).

This is indeed a text which has been picked up by the general public at large. Comments such as the following, made by a caller to the local radio station, Radio Clyde, on a special City of Culture programme, appear to constitute a popular response to the year,

'Well I would just like to ask why Glasgow District Council are refusing to do repairs to District Council houses because they say they can't afford to do them. . . . People's houses are damp and they can't get them repaired and all of a sudden they come up with £27 million for culture' (Janet Brown, caller to Radio Clyde, 'Talk in Sunday' 2/7/89)

This kind of response also seems to be a key text used in newspaper, radio and TV coverage of the year. Despite official statements suggesting that due to the way local authority budgets operate not one penny of the £50 million could be spent on anything other than cultural activities, it seems to be a construction which has persisted throughout the year².

Finally, projecting their discontent with the way 1990 seems to be anti-working class Glasgow, Workers City construct the labour controlled Glasgow District Council, the organisers of the year, as tyrants who have abandoned the socialist ethic they were

elected to uphold and sold out to the dictates of free market capitalism. It is the manner with which GDC has smoothed the path for the intrusion of private capital by selling the city as a cultural capital which has caused Workers City most concern. It would seem, contrary to the city's past reputation of being protective of working class interests, that the local authorities have now been sucked into the capitalist apparatus:

'We live in a time of sell out and betrayal, where elected representatives of the people publicly proclaim their shame for our 'inglorious past' ... while rehabilitating the reputations of some of the worst exploiters and profiteers of the past' (Donnelly 1990b, 121).

Conclusion—politics and the representation of reality

At the start of this paper, we suggested that the Postmodern Challenge for geography might involve an increase in concern for the instability of traditional categories of meaning. With cultural outlooks being formed increasingly by the media at the expense of direct contact with the world, it is imperative that empirical investigations be wary of the problems people might face in coming to terms with the proper materiality of representations. We also asserted that such problems should continue to be understood in terms of a modernist politics of contested meaning.

In the Glasgow case study, these ideas were shown to be useful. Stimulated by its post war manufacturing decline and its prescribed goal of attaining a post-industrial future, Glasgow has, since as early as 1972, embarked on a regeneration programme which has at its heart an image building campaign. Its role as European City of Culture for 1990 can be seen to be part of this. Through an avalanche of media activity, the 'new' Glasgow of 1990 has been exposed to Glaswegians.

The attempt to synthetically weave a new image for the city through the 1990 event was observed to be significant in that it activated at least some Glaswegians to think about the way the identity of the city was being portrayed. Our examination looked at two reactions by the Left in the city. In John McGrath's *Letter from Glasgow*, a vocabulary which problematised the authenticity of the cultural substance of the year, but which reified its political and economic context was observed. The discourse analysis presented encapsulated the problem of coming to terms with the legitimacy of new representations of the city. The response by Workers City on the other hand problematised the materiality of not only the representation of Glasgow as a cultural centre but also the political and economic narratives which give the year context. A more extensive analysis revealed the discursive positions occupied therein.

It is clear then that there are a number of constructions of Glasgow's role as European City of Culture of which considered here are three; John McGrath's text, the Workers City constructions, and that outlined in the introduction which might be thought of as the official representation. As intimated above, each can be regarded as being political in that they constitute representations of reality which favour some groups and not others. In this case, two can be seen to have been stimulated by the exclusion and displacement of traditional representations of Glasgow in a new scenario fashioned by professional marketeers.

At least for the Workers City group, it was highlighted that responding to such displacement and exclusion has not merely meant the problematisation of the authenticity of the new representation and the formulation of a counter voice, but 'real' political involvement. The 'Elspeth King Affair' and the claims of mis-prioritisation of 1990 cash were drawn upon as examples of ways in which Workers City texts have become popularised and acted upon.

Further, whilst the extent of this popularisation is not clear, one can reasonably claim that there has been sufficient sympathy with and real political action in the name of Workers City to cause political discomfort for the leaders of GDC. Whilst somewhat speculative, a rash of press reports appeared at the tail end of 1990 and early 1991 suggesting that the job of Mr Patrick Lally, leader of GDC, was under threat over his involvement with the Year of Culture³. It seems therefore, that the politics of the representation of the 'reality' of Glasgow's role as European City of Culture 1990, has proven significant enough to cause the political structure of the city tangible disquiet.

Notes

- 1 It should be noted that this version of postmodernism is contested by some authors who see it as not sufficiently different from modernism to deserve the 'post' prefix. Such authors assert a postmodern condition comprising an entirely new sensibility in which meaning is irrelevant and so to is the 'modernist' politics of representation (Baudrillard 1983; Lash 1990). Assessment of the status of these assertions is an ongoing concern (see for example Kellner 1987).
- 2 The construction of 1990 as a mistake in local authority prioritisation has sparked off an ongoing dialogue between people who use it (in particular Workers City) and the officials of Glasgow 1990. For a full discussion of the various texts involved see Boyle (forthcoming).
- 3 See for example Ken Smith's article *A testing time ahead for Lally* which made the front page of the Glasgow Herald 17/12/90.

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As a final point, I wish to return briefly to the whole question of the desire for *realistic* representation in Boyle and Hughes' (1991) article. The desire for realism, a desire to 'stand outside' reality and judge representations of it is, in itself, ideological. As MacCabe (1985) has shown, this account of the relation between subject and object operates to support views of an unchanging, essential human nature that denies difference, and actually acts as a support to a white, Western, heterosexual male position (see also Easthope 1988a, 1988b; Clarke, 1991). Boyle and Hughes (1991), it seems, fail to recognise the full implications of their theoretical remarks, and the incongruity of their empirical analysis in relation to their initial theoretical statement. Their article documents an interesting case, but it fails to pursue some of the most interesting questions arising from the post-structuralist literature.

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Tu cherches une belle-mère! Our reply to Clarke

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Round and round in the carousel

'Our heads? Of course, they also function outside, and in fact, on the outside we know quite well the layout of the Aedificium! But it is when we are inside that we become disoriented!' (Eco 1983, 215).

Climbing inside the head of Baudrillard for a moment (any longer and it is quite possible that one might not get back out), it is not possible to know where to begin. However since we also know that it is equally pointless not to, we can depart feeling considerably better! Having stabilised our thinking in the form of an article on Glasgow's role as European City of Culture 1990, we find that a member of our audience (our 'other' without whom we as academics have little status), finds that 'we', his 'other', do not adequately constitute himself. He therefore has taken it upon himself to re-position 'us' within his thinking—primarily as abusers of Baudrillard's theoretical writings. The 'other' is reorganised, the self restored.

What is the function of the 'other' in this context? It is surely to do with the construction of the self as 'an expert'. Dialogue is indeed dangerous since there is much at stake. Of course, traditionally this has not been such a problem. Expertise has been institutionalised so that everyone knows (?) the relative levels of expertise held by the professor, the reader, senior lecturer, etc. We can even identify the 'New

Centurions' of geography (Wrigley and Matthews 1987, Edwards 1991). With the other being an abstract position expertise, and so the self, can be stabilised.

No such luck here however. The 'other' is truly alive and kicking! The academic carousel has been joined and a challenge over levels of expertise made. Who really is the expert on Baudrillard? Who has used him 'correctly'? We need criteria to defend our competence. What criteria did the challenger use? But hold it one second, we know there is no transcendental reality. Baudrillard's texts are not 'real'. We cannot trust rationalism since all is relativised. The chase for a 'true' reading of Baudrillard, within the context of a belief in the impossibility of belief, (remember we are still inside Baudrillard's head and it is getting hot in here), is irrational. The nature of academic debate goes nowhere when the social is in ruins. Is it not peculiar that Clarke should promote Baudrillard and the idea of a de-centred self, and then privilege his reading of Baudrillard over ours?

Lacunae

'To find the way out of a labyrinth,' William recited, 'there is only one means. At every new junction, never seen before, the path we have taken will be marked with three signs. If, because of previous signs on some of the paths of the junction, you see that the junction has already been visited, you will make only one mark on the path you have taken. If all the apertures have already been marked, then you must retrace your steps. But if one or two apertures of the junction are still without signs, you will choose any one, making two signs on it. Proceeding through an aperture that bears only one sign, you will make two more, so that now the aperture bears three. All the parts of the labyrinth must have been visited if, arriving at a junction, you never take a passage with three signs, unless none of the other passages is now without signs.'

'How do you know that? Are you an expert on labyrinths?'

'No, I am citing an ancient text I once read.'

'And by observing this rule you get out?'

'Almost never, as far as I know.' (Eco 1983, 176)

The debate still continues in this world which lacks foundations and thus criteria for judging the relative merits of different interpretations. What is its nature? Clearly Clarke wishes to engage in conversation with 'us' but he knows this is ultimately impossible. There are problems with his argument but these cannot be ironed out since there is no reality for him to check out the full extent to which problems really are problems. How to proceed? Best policy is to leave things out that do not fit. For example, what does it matter that Baudrillard's political trajectory has been a nuanced and tortuous one? What does it matter that ideology figured prominently in his early writing? What does it matter that in *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*, Baudrillard can be read as *extending* Marx by exposing the one sidedness of a productionist theorisation. In this reading the sign value of commodity was always there but eclipsed. Better just sticking to the belief that the 'real' Baudrillard is the later Baudrillard. Baudrillard, the signifier during the 1980s, and Baudrillard's theories, the signified are one. No more de-centred Baudrillard. Further, what does it matter that Baudrillard seems unattracted to engaging in empirical work. He has given examples of the type of points he makes. That will do for me thank you very much. Perhaps Clarke should think of the absences in his text which allow him to engage in conversation with us in the first instance!

Clarke suggests that we misuse Baudrillard, and that our position is so far removed from his that presumably we 'would wish to have nothing more to do with Baudrillard'. It is a strange admonition to require conformity with a view to be an obligation for its examination and even its use. This amounts to a canonisation of Baudrillard and exegesis of his texts. In older terminology, why should the devil have all the best tunes?

Postscript

'That's what I said to him,' Benno replied, immediately heartened. 'I read Greek badly and I could study that great book only, in fact, through the translation of William of Moerbeke. Yes that's what I said. But Jorge added that the second cause for uneasiness is that in the book the Stagirite was speaking of poetry, which is *infima doctrina* and which exists on figments. And Venantius said that the psalms, too, are works of poetry and use metaphors; and Jorge became enraged because he said the psalms are works of divine inspiration and use metaphors to convey the truth, while the works of the pagan poets use metaphors to convey falsehood and for purposes of mere pleasure, a remark that greatly offended me ...' (Eco 1983, 111).

Clarke's reading of our paper is obtuse. Given the emphasis we place on problematising the real, drawing on the thoughts of Giddens, Lyotard and Baudrillard, it is sheer perversity to contort our position into that of 'a desire for realistic representation' (XX). His Baedeker to the landscape of Baudrillard is also an unnecessary signifier to his conceit with his own level of scholarship. Clarke's rejoinder is both partial and crude. It is partial in that it not only draws selectively on Baudrillard, as discussed above, but it fails to make the commitment to that dark side of hyper-reality that is emblematic in Baudrillard. The tortuous puzzles of Baudrillard's texts may be in the nature of a game but it is a deadly game. In Baudrillard we find the ruins of Western society and that nihilism is mirrored in the style of his writing. To read Baudrillard requires a poetic 'consciousness' that thrills to the text; a self that dilates and disperses in the channels of affect. Clarke's reading and writing bear none of this character, which denies him the position he desires.

Clarke's failure to enter into the simulacrum, as it were, makes for a crude reading of Baudrillard for one who champions an awareness of his political stance. But this is eclipsed by the barbarism of his textual strategy, for after paragraphs that feign some deconstruction of our text, and some elementary observations on Baudrillard designed to undermine our conceptual and political engagement with Baudrillard, Clarke opens the bomb doors of *The Great Artiste* and drops several centuries of epistemological critique. His misplaced characterisation of our paper as desirous of realistic representation is used to suggest we support a 'white, Western, heterosexual male position' (XX). Well, just in case the 'deconstruction' has not been effective, **THAT** should do the trick!

This reading says more about Clarke than it does about us. Those who read us with a more sympathetic eye will find the hesitancy, uncertainty, and indeed insecurity, that the postmodern critique has exposed us to. In trying to come to terms with the emptying out of meaning, of living in a processed world where consumer capitalism now mines the remaining pockets of resistance to capitalism for designer themes, the marketing agent's invention of a new Glasgow seems a legitimate subject for Baudrillarian theses. However, Baudrillard, in relativising the object of study, addresses the very nature of existence itself. Responses to this apocalypse can be either the dark brooding nihilism of consumption without satisfaction, or a ludic belly-aching

laugh at the pointlessness of it all. Since we have not (yet) surrendered (entirely) to either of these we are forced to admit a continuing allegiance to a modernist politics. In this, Clarke's observations are but a confirmation of that which we openly declare in our paper. Inconsistencies in our position are endemic to all discourses that problematise the real. Baudrillard, we believe, demands to be read aesthetically. In this reading 'reality' re-enters its own simulacrum in a last and final flash of illumination—and then silence. If, like Clarke, we too do not re-enter this final simulacrum, it is because we 'choose' not to do so. However that, in a postmodern world, is another story!

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